further confusion's

SURF SAFARI

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UTHORITY

FC

JAN. 26-29, 2009

FREE

COSTUMES!

FOOD!

PANELS!

DEALERS!

FUN!

JEFF PIDGEON 2008

ANTHROPOMORPHIC ARTS AND EDUCATION, INC.
PRESENTS

FURTHER CONFUSION 2009
SURF SAFARI!
SAN JOSÉ DOUBLETREE HOTEL
JANUARY 22-26
A.C.D.

Complete images are presented throughout the program book

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A Message From Our Chair

Aloha! Tēnā koutou! Iaorana!

Given that our theme for Further Confusion 2009 is "Surf Safari", it seems appropriate that I welcome you to this year's convention in some of the various languages that span the islands that comprise Polynesia, the islands of surf and sun. Welcome to you all, as you—our guests and attendees—are why we're here. Your continued support makes all of this possible. I would also like to extend my own profound thanks and appreciation to our convention staff this year, all the way down from Findra, my right hand as vice-chair, to those running panels, beaming FCTV into hotel rooms, hosting the convention suite, and everyone else. The countless hours that all of them have put in make all that was possible into reality. So, when you pick up your badge from the people at registration, pay for your art show winnings, see people pulling cables on the main stage, please feel free to stop for a moment to thank them for their hard work. They all do an amazing job here, and a nice word here and there goes a long way.

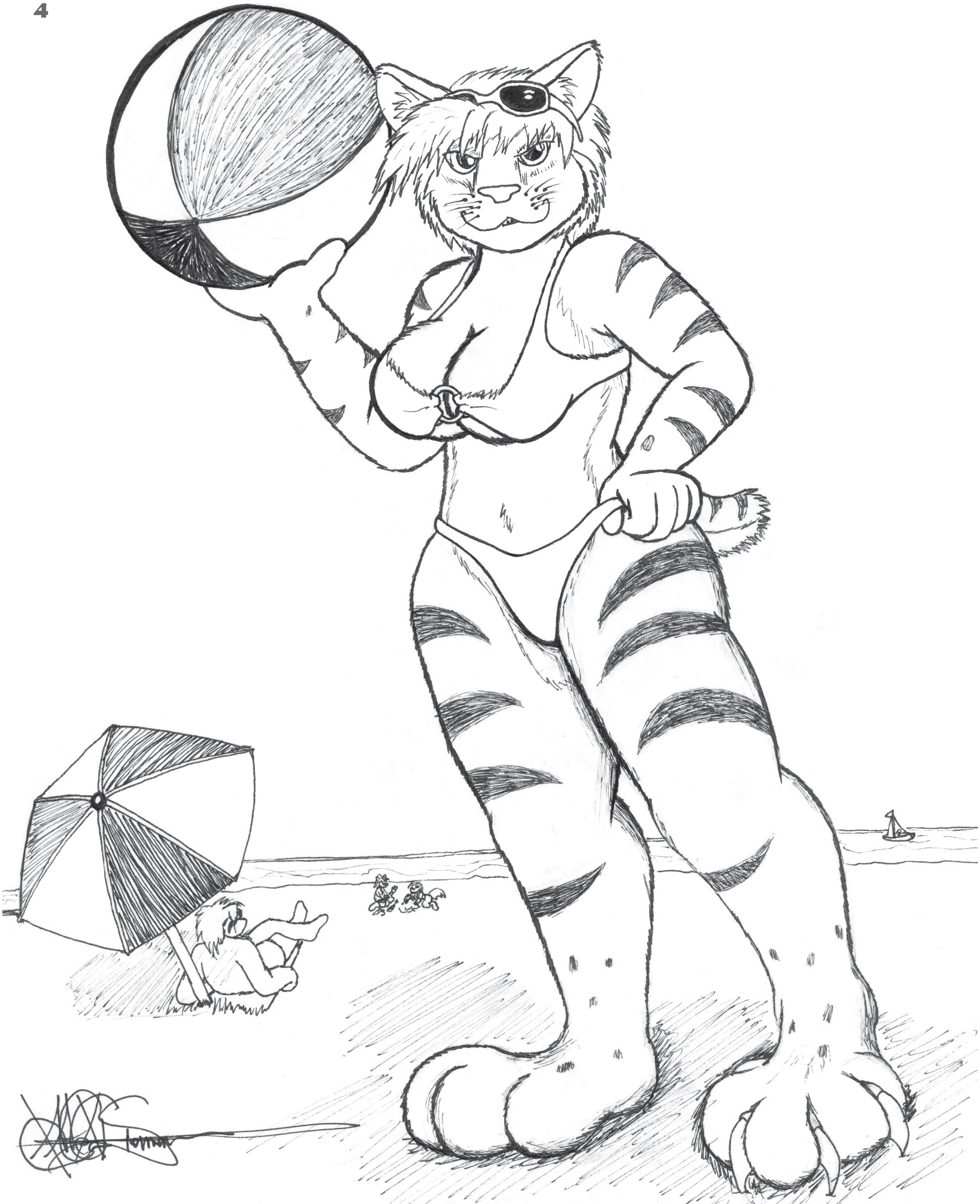
There's one other group of people we should take a moment to thank, and that is our Guests of Honor this year. We are both honored and excited to welcome artist Jeff Pidgeon, his wife Anita Coulter, who is also a writer and puppeteer, and Clare Bell, author of the "Ratha" series of books. They have volunteered to give up their weekends to join us. Please welcome them by stopping in on the panels and events that they participate in.

As with previous years, Further Confusion elects a number of charitable organizations to which the convention donates a portion of the year's proceeds. Last year we donated an amazing $22,000 across the three charities that we selected. Our charities this year are no less deserving. Our first charity should be well known to all, Guide Dogs for the Blind. With their headquarters up in San Rafael (about twenty miles north of San Francisco), they work to train up puppies from almost the point that they're born. Yet the training is not completely focused on the guide dog, but also the blind partner the dog will work with. Both train together for two to four weeks at the campus before working outside in the world. Yet in reality, the training never stops. Guide Dogs for the Blind maintain continuous contact with their graduates and their dogs, and continue to help them adjust to all sorts of situations they may face as they go through their lives together.

Our second charity is the Mountain Lion Federation, a conservation and education organization dedicated to protecting the mountain lion and its habitat. The Foundation is dedicated to the proposition that much can be done to preserve the cougar as a viable species (via habitat conservation, research, livestock protection, management, and education) and that the success of this effort can assure the survival of other species.

And so I finish by giving you this typical blessing in Hawaiian: *E pili mau na pomaika'i me 'oe;* "May you always have good fortune" or, simply, "Best wishes." Enjoy the con!

—Jeremy "Frysco" Doran
Chairman, Further Confusion 2009



Attendee Code of Conduct

Further Confusion strives to give as many people as possible a fun time. Most of the convention is for general audiences (young teens or older). We will mark clearly the few areas and events which may exceed a general-audience rating. At registration you may choose to sign an age statement stating that you are eighteen years of age or older. If you choose not to sign this statement, or are not eighteen years of age or older, your badge will be marked and you will be allowed admittance only to those areas or events that are for a general audience. Please be prepared to show your badge at any time you need access to convention space or events—it identifies you as a fully-paid attendee of the convention.

Further Confusion likes to hold itself out as a professional convention. We also hope that each attendee enjoys the fun that our wide-ranging community can provide. Please consider how your actions reflect on the convention and how they may impact or affect others. We take pride in our appearance and we want you to as well, whilst still having fun. To this effect, if the convention becomes aware of any of our attendees engaging in illegal activities, either in convention space or in private hotel rooms, we will be forced to inform the proper authorities.

Although this year we are consuming all of the function space at the hotel, keep in mind that there are always other guests of the hotel, especially on the first floor and lobby areas. Offending the hotel's other guests is inappropriate. Impressing them with how much fun and enthusiasm we have for our fandom *is* appropriate. What you consider to be acceptable behavior may not be so for others. Consideration of others is the hallmark of a mature individual and a healthy fandom. We encourage that courtesy from all participants in our community.

Safety and security matters are generally handled by FLARE, who are a group of experienced individuals used by Further Confusion and other conventions. FLARE can be contacted through Convention Operations (see below) or by asking any of the convention staff. FLARE may ask you to stop an activity or to move it to a private room. Repeat offenders may even be required to return their badges and to leave the convention premises. We ask our attendees always to comply with FLARE's requests promptly. If you feel that FLARE has made an unfair request, or has not dealt with you in a fair manner, you may bring this up at a later time with the convention chair or vice-chair.

Costumes and Clothing

Use your common sense in public areas. If you have to ask or think twice about doing it in public, take it to your room. For example, kissing and holding hands, regardless of sexual orientation, are fine. Groping, tongue battles, and nudity, regardless of sexual orientation, are not. While collars and leashes may be worn discreetly, blatant displays of bondage or BDSM in public may result in FLARE asking you to return your badge. No costume is no costume: We ask you to wear at least a shirt, shorts, and shoes in public areas of the hotel.

Body painters should keep shirts handy at all times in case they need to pass through the lobby or other areas that the hotel's other guests might frequent. Additionally, if you are wearing body paint of any kind, please refrain from sitting on hotel furniture. Similarly, the lobby and hotel furniture is *not* the proper place for decorating someone as a tiger. We have a Creator's Lounge that may be used for impromptu makeup demonstrations. Public exposure of genitalia, buttocks or (female) breasts is not permitted. As a rule, a minimum of a non-thong bathing suit must be worn at all times in public areas. "Anatomically correct" costumes must be likewise clothed.

Harassment and Assault

No means *no.* Stop means *stop.* Go away means *go away.* If someone won't understand these simple rules, contact a member of FLARE. They have the power to remove an attendee's badge for not following these commands. Harassment is any behavior that intentionally annoys or alarms another person. This includes unwanted physical contact, following someone in a public area without a legitimate reason, or threatening physical violence. Offenders may lose their badges and the matter may be referred to the proper law enforcement authorities. If you are being harassed, immediately contact FLARE, through a nearby staff member or by phoning Convention Operations from any hotel phone and asking for FLARE. Convention Operations' phone number is in the pocket program or you can dial 0 and ask for Further Confusion Convention Operations.

Buying and Selling

Further Confusion has two main areas where merchandise and services are sold—the Dealer's Room and the Furry Market Place. Anyone who receives payment for goods or services (such as body painting, massage, etc.) in convention space must comply with all the convention's rules regarding this. The Dealer's Room Rules apply in this situation, regardless of the location, and vendors must ensure they have proper California Sales Tax IDs.

If anyone wishes to request payment for goods or services and to donate the proceeds to charity, Further Confusion must be informed of this ahead of time to allow for the convention to organize the correct tax reporting.

Further Confusion takes very seriously its legal obligations in this area. Any solicitation for payment at the convention that does not comply with these obligations may result in

Attendee Code of Conduct

the offender losing their badge and being required to return all payments.

Parties, Alcohol, and Zero Drug Tolerance

Further Confusion does not tolerate serving of alcohol to minors. If you are hosting a party where alcohol is being served, it is your responsibility as host to ensure that the age of anyone drinking alcohol is checked. You should also designate someone not to drink, so that there is a fully competent person present to deal with any emergencies that might arise.

Further Confusion *does not* tolerate the use of illegal substances. The violation of the above rules could subject you to the immediate loss of your badge and convention privileges and referral of the matter to other authorities.

Water Pistols, Silly String, and Weapons

Due to the potential damage to property, water guns, silly string and the like are prohibited in public areas of the hotel or convention space.

If it looks like a real gun in any way, shape, or form, it should not be brought to the convention. The State of California has recently instituted new state laws regarding replica weapons.

There should be no "live" steel or whips being wielded in any area of the convention. If a bladed weapon or whip is part of your costume, please have it peace-bonded. This can be done at the FLARE Base at any time. If you kill it, you have to eat it!

Photography and Videotape

Further Confusion wants you to have great memories from a fantastic convention. Photographs and videotape footage by attendees are generally allowed in all common areas of the convention with the exception of the Art Show. Specific rules regarding these matters may exist for selected events. Please consult the program guide at the convention for information relating to specific events. Flash photography will be allowed at the Masquerade.

When photographing or videotaping individuals or costumes, please use common courtesy and ask before photographing them. Please respect their rights if they do not wish to be photographed or videotaped. If someone asks or otherwise indicates (remember many folks in costume do not speak) that they do not wish to be photographed, *do not photograph them*!

Photography or videography for the purpose of sale or publication to the press is expressly forbidden unless written permission has been obtained from AAE, Inc. in accordance with its press policy. Individuals may take pictures and videotapes for private viewing or sharing with friends. We ask our attendees to be courteous to those they wish to take pictures of, especially if you wish to place those pictures or video clips onto a personal Web page or similar Internet archive. In this case, please ask your subjects for their explicit permission to do this.

Attendees should be aware that footage gathered by staff members in public areas of the convention, including events and panels, may be used in a highlights tape and that attendees may appear in that tape without compensation. As mentioned above, please consult the pocket program guide for specific video, audio, and photography restrictions for specific events. Further Confusion will require a release only for footage that is obtained in areas that are not fully public (i.e., private functions and personal interviews).

These rules apply to all attendees (dealers, guests, or any level of regular membership). All members of the press and staff will conform to Further Confusion's press policy and we encourage attendees to become familiar with those rules as well.

If You Need Assistance

Further Confusion has a Convention Operations room, which is staffed night and day throughout the convention. One of their roles is to assist you if you have any problems whilst at the convention. You can find their location and phone number in the pocket program, or you can dial 0 on any internal hotel phone and ask for Further Confusion Convention Operations; they will be happy to help you in any way they can. Remember, we cannot address a problem unless we know about it.

If Convention Operations cannot assist you directly, they will have someone contact you who should be able to. For less urgent matters messages may be left with Convention Operations to be forwarded to executive staff, although it is not usually possible to pass messages on to non-executive staff. As with all messages left with Con Ops, please remember to give details of how, when, and where the recipient can contact you.

Further Confusion has a large staff to handle most aspects of the running of the convention. This allows the Chair and Vice Chair to remain available to talk about any comments or concerns that our attendees bring to them. If you see them around the corridors, feel free to speak to them—even if they appear harried, ensuring our attendees have a good time is one of their primary roles! If you need to contact the convention chair or vice-chair at any other time, you can do this by leaving a message for them at Convention Operations.

Have a Fun and Safe Convention!

If you have questions or comments regarding Further Confusion policies, please send email to *info@furtherconfusion.org*.

BARON ENGEL
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Zaos '08

GUEST OF HONOR PROFILES

JEFF PIDGEON

Jeff Pidgeon knew he was an artist. His original plan, as a first grader, was to have his very own comic strip in the newspaper, just like his hero, Charles Schultz. Several years later, Jeff saw a tiny independent film called *Star Wars* and said to himself, "Forget that! I want to work in *film*!" His only way to reconcile his compulsion to draw and his new love affair with the movies was to work in animation.

Jeff attended the California Institute of the Arts (Cal Arts) and received a BFA in character animation. Newly degreed, his first job out of the box was with Ralph Bakshi (*Fritz the Cat, Lord of the Rings*) working on *Mighty Mouse, the New Adventures*. Having worked with one giant, Jeff went on to work with another—Steven Speilberg. He worked on *Tiny Toon Adventures* until the exploits of an animated dysfunctional family captured his fancy and he left to work on *The Simpsons*.

In the midst of all this work, Jeff still somehow managed to amass a huge toy collection, one of his favorite indulgences. When buying the fantastic examples of plastic art no longer satisfied him, Jeff set out to make his own! Jeff Pidgeon's Happy Beaver made its debut at the 2007 San Diego Comic-Con. Jeff hopes to expand his toy line and, coming full circle, he hopes to start working on his very own online comic strip.

Jeff currently lives and works in the Bay Area and spends his free time snuggling his two cats and spoiling his wife. He still manages to lament the loss of all the good toy stores and crack wise at the movies. You can see Jeff's work and buy his stuff at www.jeffpidgeon.com.

ANITA COULTER

Anita Coulter received her first puppet at the age of seven. She took it with her everywhere. It proved to be very popular amongst her elementary-school friends.

As an adult, she spent several years selling puppets to tourists on Pier 39 in San Francisco. She was introduced to the San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers Guild (SFBAPG) in 1994 and joined it in 1995. She spent several years on its board (www.sfbapg.org).

The club was a great place to learn more about puppetry, with monthly workshops and performances. After years of soaking up knowledge and advice, Anita's first public performance of *Little Red Riding Hood* was made at the Oakland Children's Fairyland annual Puppet Faire. Subsequent years brought performances at Zeum and the Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose. She has puppeteered at birthday parties—but doesn't recommend it!—and for independent children's videos, for late night cabaret—highly recommended!—and for video games by LeapFrog. Currently she tours the state of California performing live shows for schools and libraries. In her spare time, she indulges her unhealthy obsession with perfect lip-synch and talks with her hands.

Anita resides in the Bay Area with her talented, toy-loving husband and two very spoiled cats. She occasionally can be spotted practicing her puppetry techniques whilst in her car waiting for the light to change.

Guest of Honor Profiles

Clare Bell

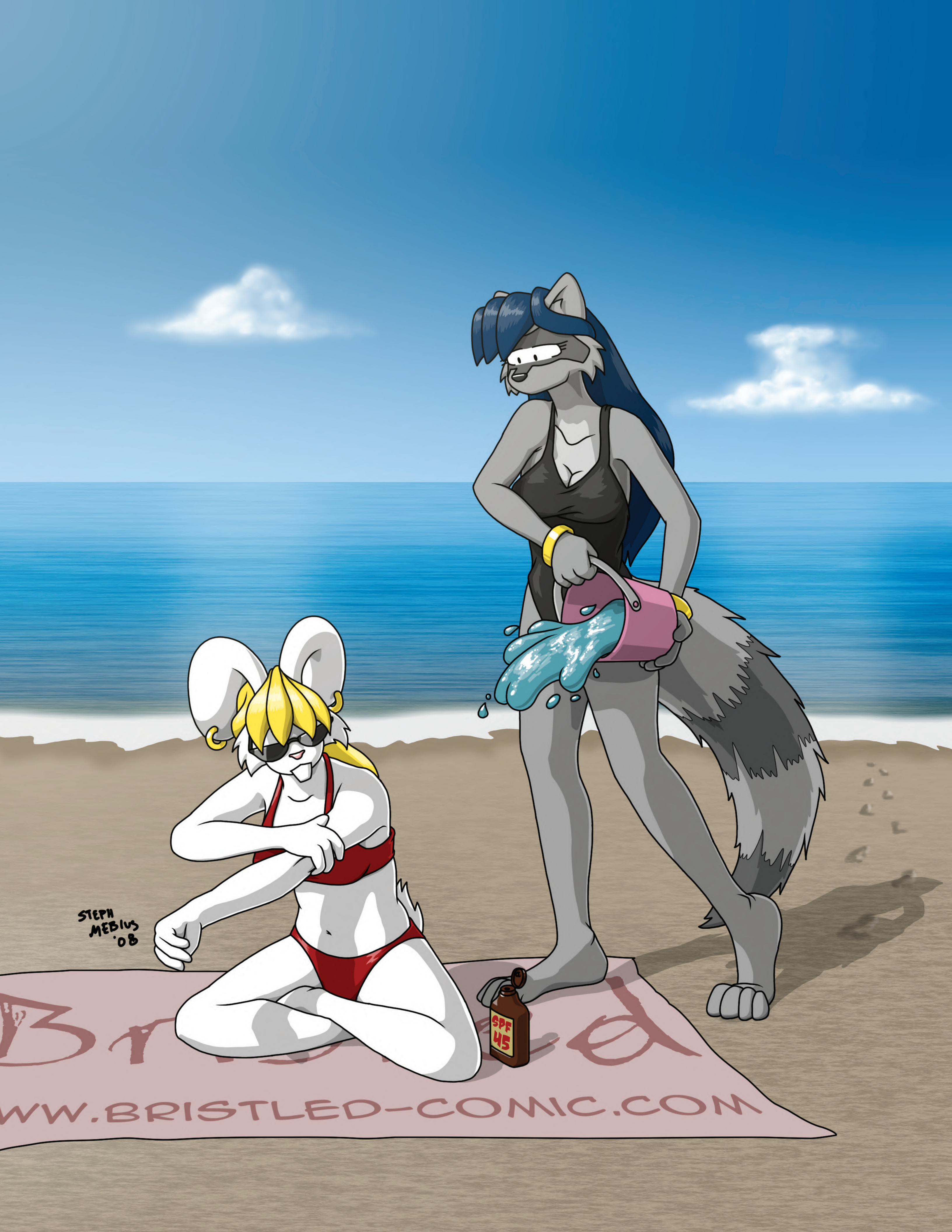
Born in England in 1952, Clare Bell moved to the US with her family in 1957. She worked in oceanography, electrical engineering, test equipment design, and mechanical engineering before writing her first book, *Ratha's Creature,* the story of a prehistoric wildcat who learns to tame fire.

Since then she has gone on to write fantasy and science fiction for both children and adults. She continues to be fascinated by big cats, as showcased in *Tomorrow's Sphinx* (cheetahs in Tutanhkmen's Eygypt) and *Jaguar Princess* (were-jaguars in Aztec and Olmec Mexico).

Her stories often explore the changes that are brought about in culture through technology. She also enjoys creating plausible and workable alien critters (the aronan fliers in *People of the Sky*). The central theme of her fiction is evolution, having been influenced early by the works of C.S. Lewis, Olaf Stapledon, and Arthur C. Clarke.

She has degrees in electrical and mechanical engineering, biology, and chemistry, and continues to working in technical areas in addition to writing fiction. She became involved in building and designing electric vehicles and spent a year in Norway working on a production EV. She has also participated in electric vehicle racing in the Arizona Public Service Company-sponsored Solar and Electrics competitions, held from 1991 to 1998. Her electric Porsche 914, known by its racing number, 13, was a well-known competitor in these races. She was also involved with the Women's Electric Racing and Educational Team (WE'RE-IT) when they raced the Porsche and a converted race-Rabbit, #6 *Hop-along.*

After moving to a site in California's coastal mountains, she and her partner put together their own solar and wind systems and experimented with a power-generating waterwheel. A naturalized citizen of the US, she now lives with her husband, Chuck Piper, in the hills west of Patterson, California.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AAE/VARIETY TRACK

AAE AND VARIETY TRACK

AAE Public Meeting Every year, the board of directors holds its annual meeting. This meeting is open to the public, and anyone interested in the workings of the parent corporation of Further Confusion is welcome to attend.

FC10 Job Fair Have you ever thought that you'd like to be staff for Further Confusion? Come by the Job Fair to get more information and apply for FC 2010 staff.

Guide Dogs for the Blind Guide Dogs graduate Lynda Johnson-Basuino, accompanied by her golden retriever guide Renata, will present about her experiences as a guide-dog user. Lynda is a marriage and family therapist intern nearing completion of hours for her licensure. Her passion for the field of psychology emerged from her personal journey—the gradual loss of her vision to retinitis pigmentosa.

Hiss 'n' Purr This is your chance to give FC09 feedback on what was hot and what was not, so that the staff can work on things for FC10.

Intro and Tour of FC This is for both first-time and long-term attendees of Further Confusion. In this introduction, we will talk about the different parts of FC, some simple guidelines, explanations of FC tracks, and a little history about FC in general. This will conclude with a walking tour of the hotel.

Surfing A guide to surfing history, culture, and terminology to enlighten any furry about the ways of the oceangoing mammals who ride the waves.

Special Performance The Ka Hale o Ku'u Hoaloha Hula troupe with be presenting a performance called "A Trip Around the Hawaiian Islands". There will be no intermission between this performance and Furry Night Live.

Meet the Guests Who are these guests of honor? And what makes them so honorable, anyway? This panel answers those questions and others you might have about this year's honorees.

Kaffeeklatch With Clare Bell A chance to meet our Guest of Honor in a small group session. So come sit down with Clare Bell in a more intimate setting and enjoy both coffee and conversation. Spaces limited to twelve (12) people. A sign-up form will be located at the Info Desk at noon on Saturday, 24 January.

Kaffeeklatch With Jeff Pidgeon and Anita Coulter A chance to enjoy coffee and conversation with our Guests of Honor, Jeff Pidgeon and Anita Coulter, in a more intimate setting. Spaces limited to twelve (12) people. A sign-up form will be at the Info Desk at noon on Friday, 23 January.

Reading from Clare Bell's latest book Come join our Writer Guest of Honor for a reading from her latest book, *Ratha's Courage.*

Storyboarding, Yesterday to Today A brief history of storyboarding from the perspective of a story artist, tracing the evolution from paper to storyboarding in the computer. Presented by Jeff Pidgeon.

HEART TRACK

ART TRACK

FC09 Art Jam Inviting all artists to come by, sit down, and have fun!

Art Raffle Submit art into the raffle to get one entry ticket into Sunday night's Art Raffle! Win art and other prizes! Submitting other art from other people is permitted as well! Join in and have fun!

Art of Wings Join Jennifer "Nambroth" Miller and Amber "Vantid" Hill as they reveal the secrets of realistic bird wings! Learn how to construct, layer, and texture feathers for all your wildlife, fantasy, and anthro art pieces. This panel is hands-on. Real bird wings will be available for participants to handle, observe, and even photograph for their own artistic reference. We hope to see you there!

Artpocalypse Artists face off in multiple duels of creativity and ingenuity, led only by the mercy of the audience and the moderator that stands between them.

Basics of Electronic Images Learn about fundamentals and background of electronic images from a graphic design professional. Topics include resolution, file format, color models, registration, printer's marks, bleeds, high-end printing, and terminology.

Basics of Page Lay-out Learn about fundamentals and background of page layout from a graphic design professional. Topics include elements of a book or magazine, elements of a page, use of type and images, color, bleeds, reference books, and terminology.

Basics of Typography Learn about fundamentals and background of typesetting from a graphic design professional. Topics include type categories and styles, font-file format, characters, glyphs, keyboard shortcuts, type utilities, tracking, kerning, leading, and terminology.

Digital Painting This panel offers a rare chance to see how to create digital art that looks like a traditional paintings. Panelists will create a new digital painting from scratch, answering questions and walking the audience through the painting process step by step along the way! No experience necessary.

How to Draw Expressions and Emotions Having trouble figuring out the right expression? Can't get the right angle for the face? Rozga is here to help you with those problems. Rozga-chan will teach you a bit about the angle of faces, and expressing them.

How to Draw Robots Few things are as common in modern *animé* as giant robots. This panel will provide the basics of drawing them, such as construction and basic aesthetics, as well as some pointers specifically geared toward drawing giant robotic animals.

Perspectives on Anatomy, Physiology, and Behavior A discussion of the physical, medical, and social aspects of anthropomorphic art and writing. Led by a licensed veterinarian, this panel will cover concepts of relevant anatomy and behavior as it pertains to art and world-building. A dynamic set of topics shaped in part by audience participation will explore "just how much fiction do you want in your fiction?"

Fursuit Track

Action Suits Wonder what makes a fursuit wearable for hours? Want a suit that you can wear anywhere? Join Hyena Girl for a panel on construction hints and techniques for building your fursuit for comfort and wearability.

Airbrushing Airbrushing can bring your fursuit creations to a new level. Learn how to add those airbrush details that make a fursuit really come to life.

Character Performance Having trouble getting into character or just want to improve how your character interacts with those around him or her? Join us for a fun time of exercises and discussion about performing in fursuit. Fursuits encouraged (not required) to join in.

Costuming for the Physically Challenged Rukario is a physically challenged fursuiter who hails from New York. He has been involved with costuming for the last couple of years and has some unique insights about how costuming can open up a new world of interaction and exploration for all.

Critterlympics Join the fun as the Critterlympics return for the eighth spectacular year! Fursuited athletes from all over will battle to decide who is the best of the furry best. Hosted once again by Penh Gwyn.

Furry Night Live Tech Rehearsal *(participants only)* Mandatory pre-show rehearsal for Furry Night Live. We will be doing a complete show run-through. Acts must appear at this rehearsal or they will be stricken from the roster. Interested participants who have not otherwise turned in their participation forms should first attend the dress rehearsal.

Furry Night Live FNL features a live MC and a multitude of live furry stage and video performances competing for the Audience Choice Awards. Come vote for your favorite act and see who walks away with the cash prizes at the end of the show. *Note:* Interested participants must attend the dress rehearsal on Saturday and the tech rehearsal before the show.

Fursuit Body Construction Learn about and discuss techniques for making quality fursuit bodies.

Fursuit Construction 101 Just starting your first fursuit project? Not sure where to begin? Join us for this panel where we will be talking about design, materials, and techniques for building fursuits.

Fursuit Dance Instruction Come shake some tail! Pick up some moves from our talented fursuit dance instructors. Fursuits are highly encouraged.

Fursuit Head Construction Learn techniques for building fursuit heads from some of the most notable fursuit makers in the fandom.

Fursuit Makeover Come watch Brokken T. Wolf take a lifeless fursuit and bring it to life. Brokken will be making over a chosen fursuit prior to the con to be revealed live at this event. We will show a video of how he went about making the transformation and Brokken will be there to answer questions and give some insight to the creative process.

Fursuit Parade A fun parade through out the whole hotel for those who bring fursuits to Further Confusion!

Fursuit Resources Confused about where to get questions answered? Not sure where to buy foam, fur, or other materials? This is where you will find answers on building, locating materials, and getting feedback on your fursuit projects.

Fursuit Roundtable Join Chairo for the traditional meet-and-greet for fursuiters and meet your fellow fursuiters in a nice relaxed environment.

Hands On: Building Fursuit Handpaws Get some hands-on experience building yourself some handpaws! We will help you with the design and construction. Needles, thread, and sewing machines will be provided. There will be some fur provided but plan on bringing fur that matches your character.

Latex and Casting A small-scale demonstration on the fundamentals of creating plaster molds and using them to produce latex costuming pieces such as pawpads, noses or complete paws and heads.

Masquerade Come to the masquerade and see the new costumes. Awards will be given to the top entrants.

Masquerade Information Meeting and Judging This is a informational meeting for those interested in being in the masquerade. Registration paperwork will be given out at this time. The judges will be available to judge the construction of your costume, so that you can avoid the madness of getting judged during the evening rehearsal. You need only bring your costume, you do not need to be wearing it.

LOUNGES

Aloha Lounge A lounge space to chill out and meet other furs on Thursday night.

Creator's Lounge Come to the Creator's Lounge to mingle with artists and writers and to share and create new works of art. Supplies will be provided, but bring your own as well. This room will be open 24 hours throughout the con, from late afternoon on Thursday until noon on Monday. There will be two events recurring from last year: the Tin Artist and the Art Raffle.

Fursuit Lounge Come rest, cool down, and hydrate! There is even a fix-it kiosk with a sewing machine and all the other things you will need to fix up your fursuit!

Gaming Lounge Would you care to play a little game? Whether your fancy is rummy, *Risk,* or *Rock Band,* the Gaming Lounge has you covered. Open for the entire duration of the con, we offer a place to play card, board, role playing and video games loaned to us from con goers like you. You'll also find information on all official FC tournaments, as well as unofficial ones.

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2008

GAMING TRACK

***Dance Dance Revolution* Tournament** Move your feet to the beat! Further Confusion Gaming tests your groove in our official *Dance Dance Revolution* tournament, where only the fleetest feet survive! If you think you've got the rhythm, or you just like to watch people bouncing and flailing like goons, come play or watch as the dance battles rage!

FMCL@FC Cribbage Tournament A Further Confusion tradition returns, as the FurryMUCK Cribbage League once again hosts its annual live cribbage tournament on Sunday. If you're an FMCL member, want to find out more about the FMCL, want to learn how to play cribbage, or just want to play some cards, we'll be glad to have you join us.

Fur-1 in the Blank This game show is so funny . . . How funny is it? You'll have to come watch to find out! For the third straight year, Genevive Fox hosts our version of classic gameshow Match Game with veterans Chip Unicorn, Dusty Rhoades, and Vixie (with Steve Plunkett). Joining them will be FC09 Co-Chair Findra, and artists Vince Suzukawa and Michele Light. Come join the fun . . . you'll laugh your _____ off!

Furmily Feud Returning for another year of strikes and surveys, Furmily Feud will be sure to entertain. The Gneech hosts our game again this year, and all survey answers will be provided by attendees at this very convention! So whether you're part of a "family" of five hoping to play, or just looking to enjoy the battle, come down to the Feud, where your opinion matters!

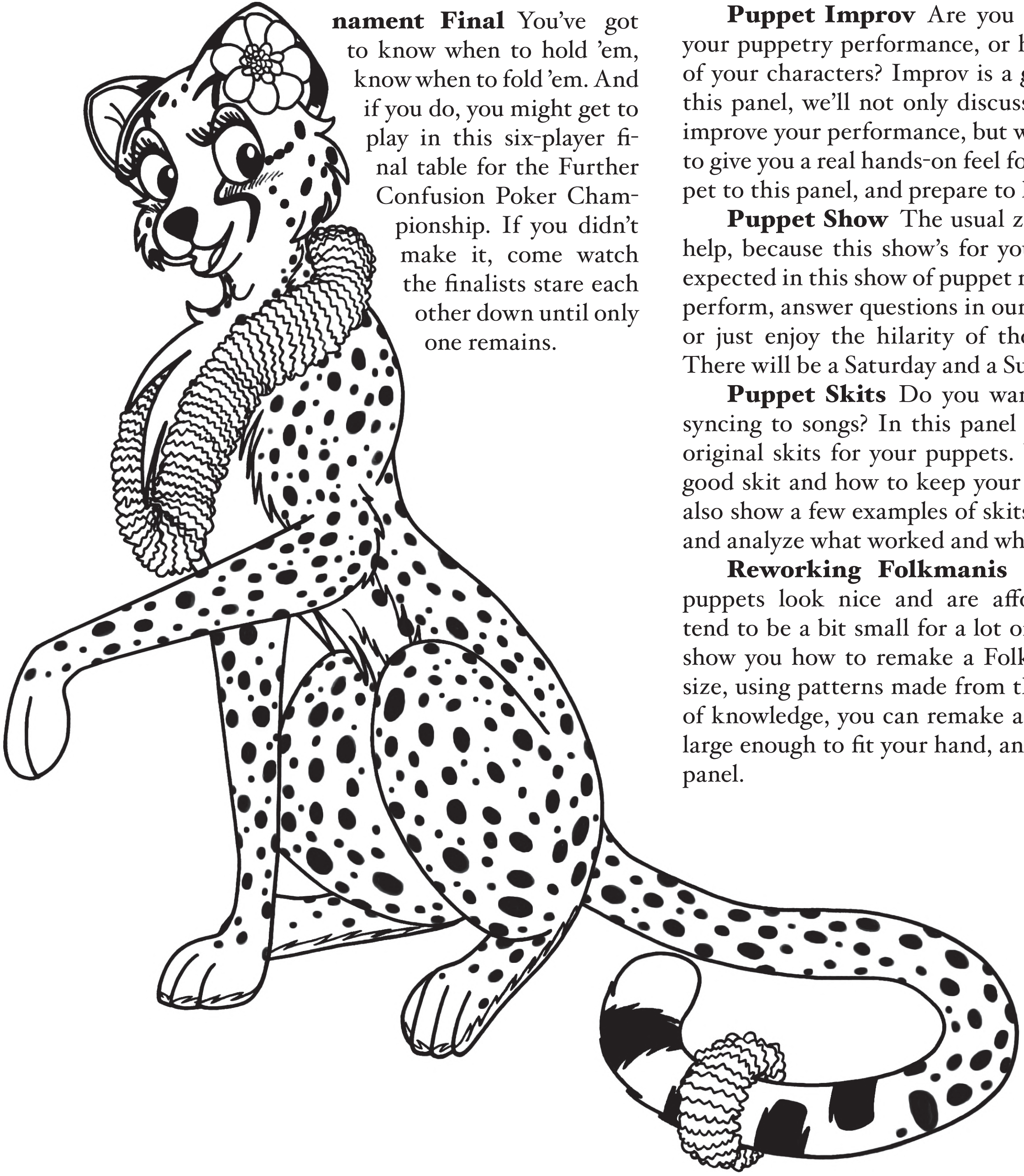
***Guitar Hero*/*Rock Band* Tournament** Calling all shredders! The FC gaming track is looking for all masters of small plastic guitars with colored buttons to show their skills with various versions of *Guitar Hero* and *Rock Band.* Players can compete by themselves or in guitar/bass teams, and on any difficulty they like.

GAMING TRACK

Introduction to the Gaming Industry Few industries are seeing the kind of expansion and resistance to poor economic performance as the video game industry. Characters such as Sonic the Hedgehog, Fox McCloud, Crash Bandicoot, and Sly Cooper have also made the industry attractive to fans of anthropomorphic animals. If you are interested in a career, this discussion will give you the information to take your first steps.

***Super Smash Bros.: Brawl* Tournament** One of gaming's most popular events from last year is back—and upgraded! We've traded in our Gamecubes for Wiis, so come and flail your way to the top of the heap in this chaotic battle of cute cartoony characters.

Texas Hold-'Em Tournament Final You've got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em. And if you do, you might get to play in this six-player final table for the Further Confusion Poker Championship. If you didn't make it, come watch the finalists stare each other down until only one remains.



PUPPETRY TRACK

PUPPETRY TRACK

Advanced Puppetry Techniques Once you have the basics down, it's time to move on to the next level. In this panel we'll show how to really bring those puppets to life, from improving your lip sync to acting and movement. Bringing a puppet with you is strongly encouraged, to make this a true hands-on panel.

Making a Puppet Video Have you wondered what would make your con videos of puppet shows look better, or how to create a video to put online? In this panel, we will actually make a simple video, and along the way, learn about lighting, staging, how to make your video interesting, and tips for getting it online. Bring a puppet and prepare to smile for the camera! Hosted by Steve Plunkett, Zorro, and Akeakami.

Puppet Improv Are you looking for ways to add to your puppetry performance, or help develop the personality of your characters? Improv is a great way to do that, and in this panel, we'll not only discuss what and how improv can improve your performance, but we'll try several bit of improv to give you a real hands-on feel for it. Bring your favorite puppet to this panel, and prepare to have some fun!

Puppet Show The usual zaniness continues with your help, because this show's for you! Audience participation is expected in this show of puppet madness, whether you like to perform, answer questions in our puppet-driven game shows, or just enjoy the hilarity of those crazy furry puppeteers. There will be a Saturday and a Sunday show.

Puppet Skits Do you want to move beyond just lip-syncing to songs? In this panel we'll discuss ways to create original skits for your puppets. We'll discuss what makes a good skit and how to keep your audience entertained. We'll also show a few examples of skits we have performed at cons and analyze what worked and what didn't within each one.

Reworking Folkmanis Puppets Folkmanis hand puppets look nice and are affordable—however, they do tend to be a bit small for a lot of people. In this panel, we'll show you how to remake a Folkmanis puppet into a larger size, using patterns made from the puppets. With a little bit of knowledge, you can remake a Folkmanis puppet into one large enough to fit your hand, and we'll show you how in this panel.

SCI & TECH TRACK

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TRACK

Cyber-Furry An exploration of online resources of interest to furry fandom.

Furry Ham Radio Come to a nice friendly furry meet and greet where you can meet old friends, make new friends, and learn about the exciting hobby of ham radio.

Furry Reentry Let us put furries in space. What are our prospects for cheap access to low Earth orbit, halfway to anywhere. When can we have a furrycon in space?

Furry Transformation '09 A look at latest scientific developments to enable people to become "real" furries.

Live-Animal Panels Live-animal panels brought to FC by Leopards, Inc. Increased awareness and education can only help protect these animals in the wild. They will be doing two panels for FC. Please only attend one panel so that other attendees can get a chance to view these lovely animals.

Second Life® *Second Life* is home to eight million-plus avatars and is one of the most active communities for furry interaction. Come and hear what's out there for the modern furry in this huge and malleable virtual world!

Sirrash: The Dragon of the Ishtar Gate Dr. Willy Ley and many others have suggested we may be sharing our world with real dragons.

Spintronics A new science that utilizes the quantum spin of the electron rather than the charge. *This is real, new, and world-changing.* The presentation is for anyone with curiosity to enjoy.

World-Building This panel will create a new world and species, based on suggestions thrown out by the audience. While we're doing that, we'll talk about what goes into a great setting: What pitfalls do people fall into? What progression and evolution should a world have? What relationships happen among species? What about the interrelationships of your species? What niches does every world need?

Uplifting Animals to Furry People Uplift is a classic topic in science fiction. From Cordwainer Smith to CJ Cherryh, from Robert Heinlein to David Brin, uplift has filled our genré with some of its most memorable stories. Let's talk about super-chimps and dolphins with arms and hands for a while.

Veterinary Emergency Medicine A semi-structured discussion of various aspects of companion animal emergency medicine presented by a licensed veterinarian. Topics include recognizing common emergency conditions, common medical conditions and surgeries, unusual case reports, and questions from the audience. Many photos and visual aids will be utilized. Discussion of the practice of medicine as related to anthropomorphics will be covered.

Why Are Humans Not Furry? The naked ape is one of our most enduring scientific mysteries. We are going to revisit the question at Further Confusion.

Wolf Recovery Wolves and wolf recovery: a firsthand look at current wolf events.

SOCIAL TRACK

SOCIAL TRACK

Twenty Years?! A discussion of how furry cons got started, including some interesting and humorous stories from early conventions. So come join us to honor twenty years of furry conventions and learn more about how furry fandom has evolved.

Coffee, Tea, and Memes Back by popular demand! Come see the panelists hold forth on nearly any subject under the sun, including topics suggested by the audience. Listen to anecdotes, discussion, and debate, and put in your two cents' worth—but keep it short, because a new topic will be up in just a few minutes! Modest refreshments will be provided.

Dead Dog Dance Once again, we say farewell to another year at Further Confusion. Come join us for one last dance and another chance to say goodbye to all your many new friends.

Flowology Toys Workshop Workshop designed with focus on getting in touch with the body, again, with the aid of a few tools—one being poi! Come learn, play, and explore a fun, and challenging, way to become in tune with your body through the art of poi, hoop, and fire dancing. We will provide sock poi for you to use, but if you bring your own, more power to you!

Friday Night Dance A retro-style dance with all your favorite music from the '70s, '80s, and '90s. The first hour of the night will be fursuit-friendly, and fursuits are encouraged for the entire night.

Open-Mic Night Everyone is welcome to join FC09 for an open-mic night. Things will be kicking off Saturday Night at 11 PM, so bring your instruments, voice, and ears to the show!

Opening Ceremonies Join the FC09 staff to kick off the convention with our opening-ceremonies celebration.

Saturday Night Dance Come dance the night away to the finest furry DJs, playing the best in electronic dance music. Not just a dance, but a full multimedia extravaganza featuring music, video, art and performance. Be sure not to miss it. The first hour of the night will be fursuit-friendly, and fursuits are encouraged for the entire night.

Sunday Night Dance Another chance to shake your tail to some great music on the dance floor. Come join us for the Sunday Night Dance. The first hour of the night will be fursuit-friendly and fursuits are encouraged for the entire night.

Thursday Night Dance Immediately following the opening ceremonies, come join us for a celebration of dance and music. Reconnect with all your old friends while making some new ones.

SPECIES TRACK

SPIRITUALITY TRACK

SPECIES TRACK

Adult Dragons We are back for our third year in the Adult Dragon Panel. Once again we will be an open forum to discuss the subject of loving dragons in all regards and media. From books, movies, literature and especially our own fur artists, there will be plenty to talk about, learn, and share. This is an adults only panel and you must be at least eighteen years old — no exceptions. Badges will be checked at the door.

Aquatic furs All right! This year is our year! The theme is Surf Safari, and who could be a better theme species than us! All dolphins, whales, sharks, otters, penguins, and etc! Anything else in between and otherwise! Come join us! This year is ours! PS: Surfing ability not required

Avians Eagles and cranes, the nightingale and the phoenix, all play their feathery parts around the world. We'll share some stories, talk some biology, and have some feathered fun.

Canines The noble wolf, the cunning coyote, the loyal dog — all of these are stereotypes furry fans know, love, and emulate. Come check out what it means to be a canine fan in furry fandom.

Felines What does a feline have to do with surfing? Believe it or not, some felines actually like water — tigers swim to cool off. For the rest of us cool cats, there are other ways to enjoy ourselves.

Four on the Floor Are two legs just not cutting it for you? Would you like the extra power and stability of a quadruped, without losing those useful hands/paws? Come join us in a discussion of centaurs and centauroids, one of the oldest hybrid creatures out there. Topics ranging from the classic Greek centaur to Chakats and beyond! Bring your favorite artwork to share!

Foxes Humans and foxes have one significant thing in common—you can find them just about everywhere. Because of that, humanity has featured their pointy-eared, bushy-brushed neighbors prominently in their culture—religion, myth, and fiction. Come discuss the fox's place in the real world, in historical culture, and in the furry fandom.

Gryphons Combining the regal traits of both the lord of the beasts and king of the sky, truly no other creature can match the majestic duality of the gryphon. Where did such powerful symbolism come from? How has it influenced us today? Where *are* the gryphons today? Come to the Gryphon Panel to find the answers to those questions and more, and bring your own questions to pick the brains of our panelists.

Hybrid Furs Hybrids: myth, failed experiment, or identity crisis? Join Chaos Tigerwolf and hear about genetic engineering, mythological creations, drunken accidents, and multiple fursonality disorder. Are we crazy because we can't make up our minds what we are, or is there a back story why we modify our hybrid forms so often?

Mustelids Weasel power! Let's learn and talk about ferrets, otters, stoats, and all the other members of the most successful family of carnivores in the animal kingdom (and they aren't doing so shabby in furdom, either) with two experts in the field. Find out how weasel species act in the wild, the secret lives of domestic ferrets, and why mink are all utter bastards.

Rabbits We all know about rabbits—or do we? For an animal so common and celebrated in story and myth, it is astounding how little most people know about their basic biology and behavior. How are rabbits like horses? Why do they breed "like bunnies"? There will be bunnies to draw and photograph.

Rodents If rodents gnaw at your heartstrings, come to the Rodent Panel.

Ungulates Do you like to feel your hooves thunder across the plains? Do you feel the need to bleat? If so, welcome to the Ungulates Panel! We'll be discussing what's best about horses, deer, sheep, and more here, so come on down and have a good nicker with Felder and Hex!

SPIRITUALITY TRACK

Furry Christianity What does it mean to be furry and be a Christian? Please come and discuss. People of all beliefs are welcome, but this meeting is geared toward the discussion of Christianity and furry.

Norse Paganism Come and learn wights (spirits) and shapeshifters in the beliefs of the North.

Saved by the Buddha Come and hear about Buddhism from a fur who has been a practitioner for several years.

Spirituality Roundtable An open discussion of spirituality, especially as it relates to furry fandom.

Spirituality Without Spirits Spirituality is something very personal and does not have to depend on any interaction or belief in any numinous (spiritual) realm. This is a friendly discussion (open to all believers and non-believers alike) about what spirituality means when there are no God or Gods, no spirits or Loa. How is that connection to "the other" kept open, when there is no realm beyond the present world?

Totemism Do you feel a spiritual connection to your 'inner furry'? Perhaps you are a totemist? In this panel we will share our beliefs and experiences of our totems/spirit parents/spirit allies.

Venturing Out of the Den Do you cringe when friends ask you about being a furry? Learn how to comfortably come out and talk about being furry, with a professional who headed the media relations team for the Burning Man organization. Gain tools and communication skills for talking about our subculture in a way that demystifies and shows furry in a positive light, and even learn how to easily field the dreaded *CSI* question!

WRITING TRACK

WRITING TRACK

Artistic Inspiration Where do you get your ideas? How do you cause inspiration? What are the best conditions for inspiration? What do you do to arrange for inspiration? What's the address for the "post office box in Schenectady" that Harlan Ellison gets his ideas from?

Bloggers' Roundtable If you have a blog, what do you write? How do you get more exposure, if you want it? What ethics are involved in blogging? Remember to link to this panel.

Carnivores, Herbivores, Omnivores, and Scavengers, Oh My! Humans are omnivores. How would society have changed if our food needs had been different? What would a society of scavengers look like? Could intelligence have evolved among herbivores?

Copyright: What's Right, What's Wrong, What's Legal . . . Copyright affects almost everything on the Internet. Is copyright good, bad, or a necessary evil? When is fan fiction legal or illegal?

Difursity in Writing Our planet has many cultures, often in the same locations. How can you build not just one culture, but a whole collection of them—that work together, compete, and sometimes attack each other? How do cultures and species interact: one culture per species, or are there cultures that spread across species?

"Eye of Argon" Polynesian culture often uses dance to tell a story, but sci-fi/fantasy conventions tend to read and improv—at least they do with the "Eye of Argon". Come enjoy the worst fantasy story ever written and "hang ten" on waves of laughter.

Fiction and Economics How do political and economic systems change how a character thinks and acts? How would a character raised under monarchy act differently than someone raised under an anarchist system? What about capitalism or communism—how do their assumptions change people?

Fleshing Out a Character You have a concept for a character. What kinds of questions should you ask to make the character more substantial? How do you make her appealing? How do you find a character's motivation? What could you find in her sock drawer?

Furry Linguistics and Other Communication What parts of language would evolve differently with different physiology? What might different languages be like? If writing were scent-based, how could one make novels that lasted? There shall be no comments about dogs writing "pee-mail".

Magic in Writing Magic can be anything from "wish, and it becomes so" to an alternate form of engineering. What kinds of magic work best in stories? What limits should a good magic system have?

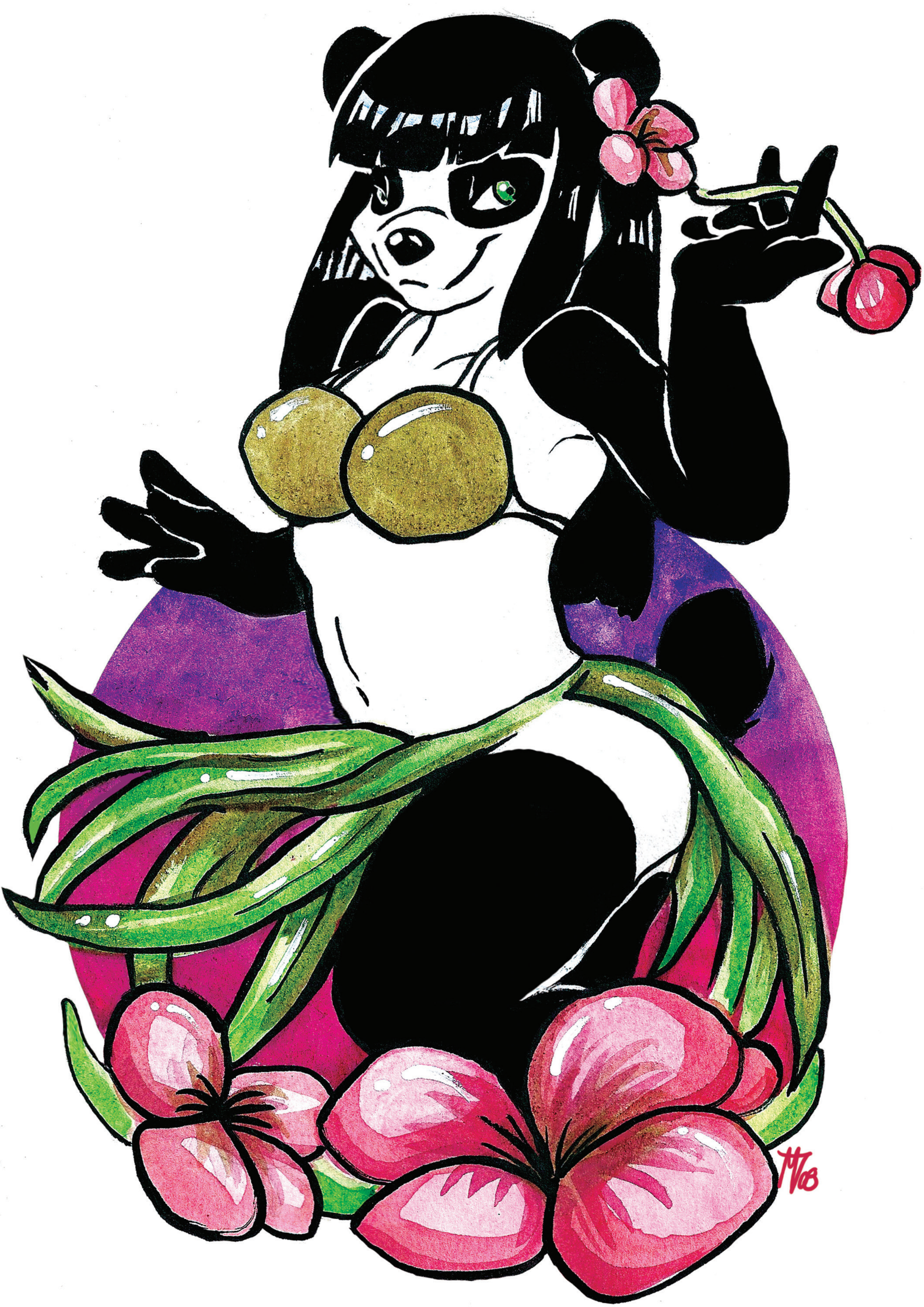
Myths, Legends, and Fairy Tales The principle of anthropomorphism is as old as civilization. From Coyote creating the world to Anansi's tricks through Fenris at Ragnarok, furries appear in myths and legends. Share your favorites, and listen to ones you may not have heard.

The Best Furry Writing You've Never Read . . . Come and discuss furry writing and furry comics that are less popular than they should be.

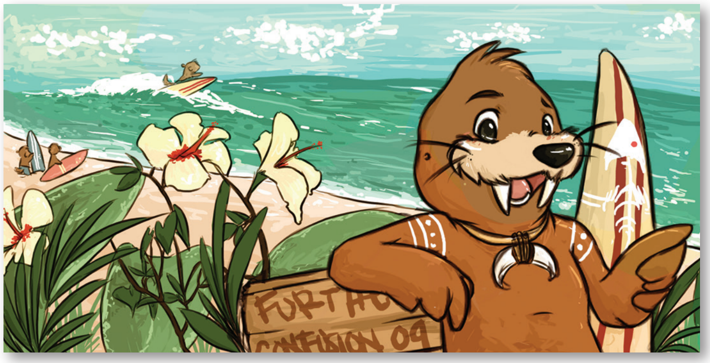
Waves of Thought (Friday) Resting on the beach is a great time for ideas to flow through your mind. Some in particular could be more of creative means. More specifically of the writing type. So if you're more into the writing genre of creation, stop by the writer's workshop and we'll toss some stories around—or even make up some on the spot. Either way, we'll be sure you'll have a good time.

Waves of Thought (Sunday) Resting on the beach is a great time for ideas to flow through your mind. Some in particular could be more of creative means. More specifically of the writing type. So if you're more into the writing genre of creation, stop by the writer's workshop and we'll toss some stories around—or even make up some on the spot. Either way, we'll be sure you'll have a good time.

Writing for Comics Writing for a visual medium can be a daunting task. Learn how to start with a treatment before moving onto creating an outline, then a full script. Topics include how to avoid many beginners' pitfalls when making characters and plot in a comic, plus how to keep themes strong, the plot direct and simplifying panel layout. Warning: the lecture may contain frequent cursing and references to Pushkin.



BADGE ART SHOWCASE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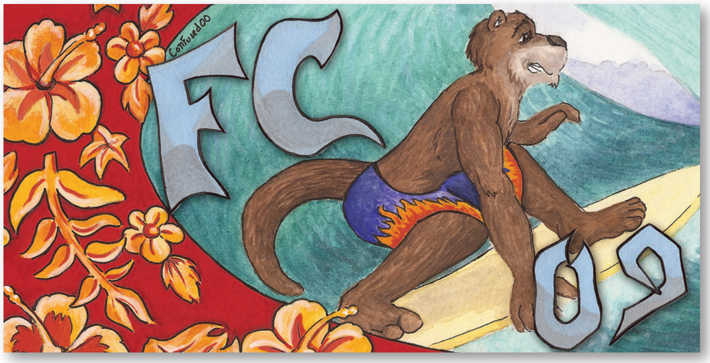
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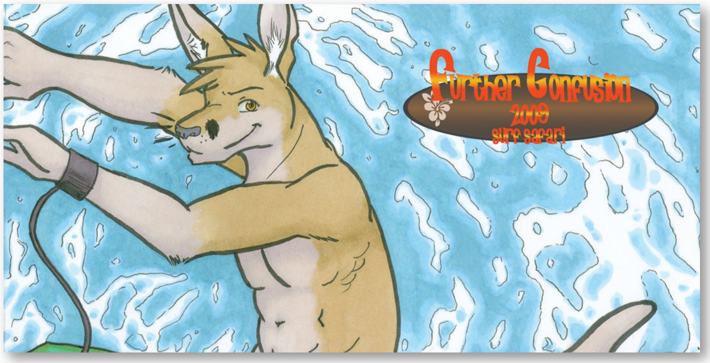
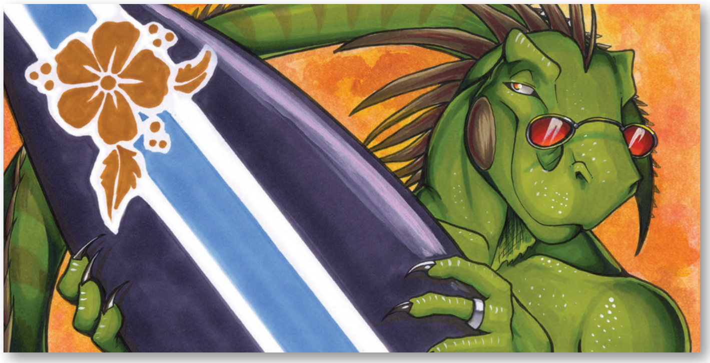
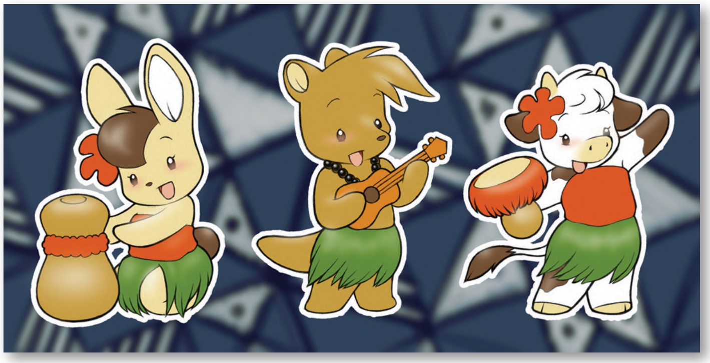
ConfusedOO
www.furaffinity.net/gallery/confusedoo


Further Confusion
2009
surf safari

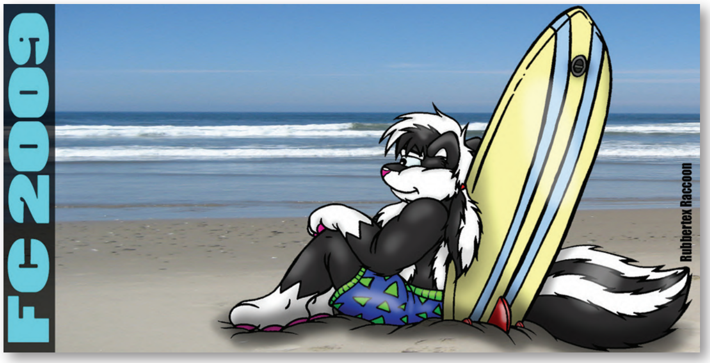
Jordan D'Arcy (Roo Boy)
www.furaffinity.net/user/rooboy



Lis "Lizardbeth" Boriss www.lizardbeth.net



Ponygirl www.studiocute.com


FC 2009
Rubbertex Raccoon

Rubbertex Raccoon www.furaffinity.net/
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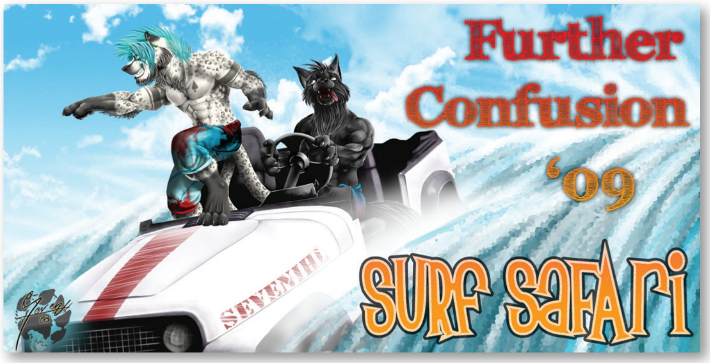
BADGE ART SHOWCASE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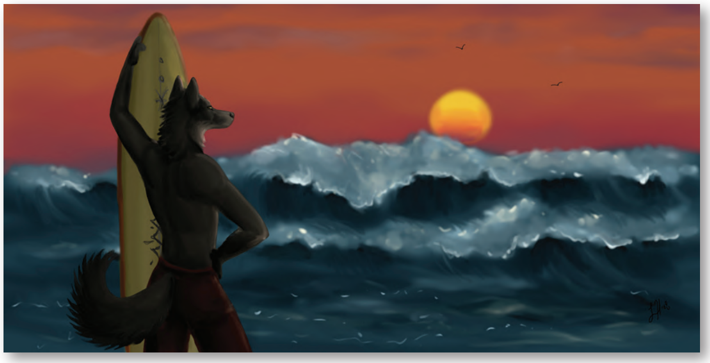
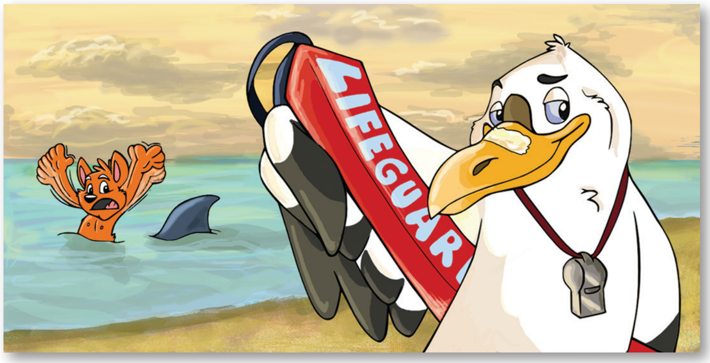


Sidian www.sidian.net



Sophie Cabra
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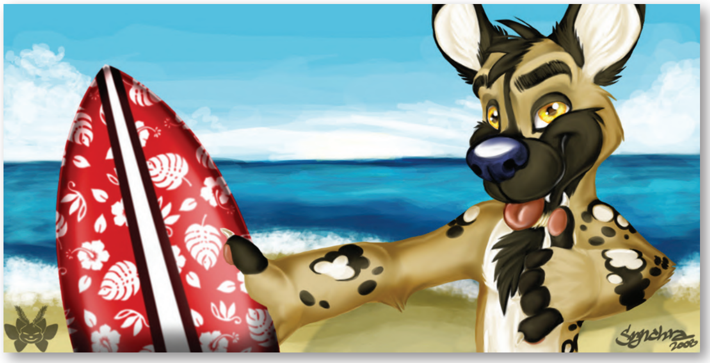
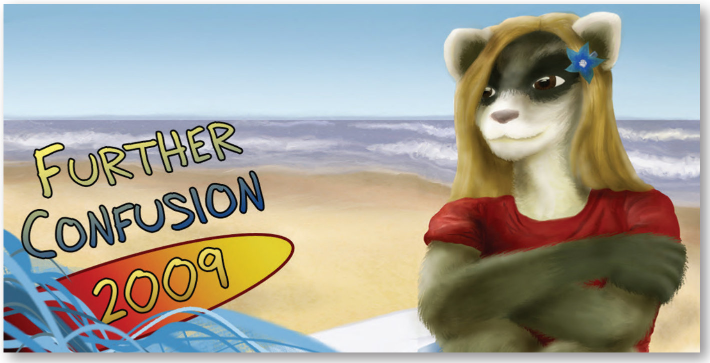


Mandy "Synchra" Draeger
www.synchrastudios.com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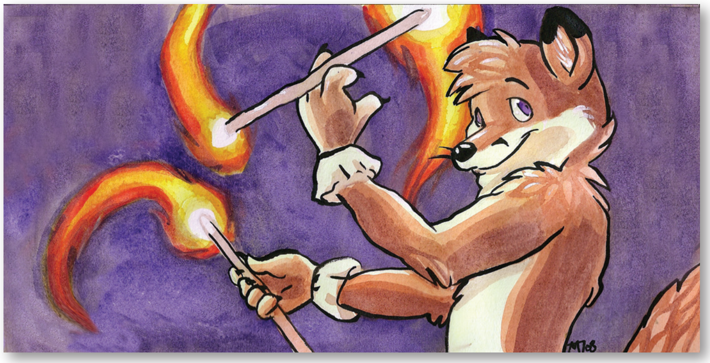
Tibek tibek.deviantart.com



Touch My Badger
www.furaffinity.net/user/touchmybadger

AN EXCERPT FROM

RATHA'S COURAGE

CLARE BELL

A SHIVER OF EXCITEMENT WENT through Ratha. She began her stalk, belly fur brushing the ground. Grass whispered past her legs as she felt the slow, controlled power of each muscle. Her tailtip tingled with the urge to twitch, but she held it still.

The horse the Named called a striper tossed its head and flapped its tail, eyes widening. Ratha slowed her downwind stalk so that she seemed nearly frozen, yet was still moving. The striper swung its neck around, jerking its head and ears back.

Ratha stilled until the herdbeast settled, then quickened her stalk, easing her weight from one foot to the next, placing each directly ahead of the one behind and moving so smoothly she felt as though she were flowing across and through the grass, a green-eyed river of tawny gold.

Nearing the striper's dancing rear hooves, inhaling its sweat-sharpened scent, Ratha trembled with the impulse to dash, spring, and wrestle her prey to the ground. She took a long slow breath—as the herding teacher, Thakur, had taught her—mastered her urge, and crept around the striper, circling in front of it.

Stripers were new to the Named herds. This horse was dun, with dark brown mane and tail. Ratha turned her head to bring her gaze down along its banded forelegs to the three-toed feet. These feet differed from those of the smaller dappleback horses that the clan had long tended. The striper's center toe, sheathed in a single hoof, was larger, the side toes farther off the ground. That hoof had far more power than the dappleback's feet. Ratha had dodged it many times, and other herders had been sent sprawling.

The striper grunted and whinnied, its nostrils flaring with her smell. From her crouch, Ratha lifted her chin and stared up at the horse, trying to catch and hold its gaze. As if sensing her purpose, the striper reared, its forefeet cutting the air, its tail whisking its flanks. She froze again, waited.

When the striper dropped down, she pounced on its stare with her own. Again it evaded her, closing its eyes and ducking its head, showing her only its bristling mane.

She knew the stripers were smarter than the dapplebacks; by now her stare would have a dappleback helplessly imprisoned.

Thakur had warned her that the stripers were clever, that the larger head held a more alert and cunning mind. Suppressing her frustrated growl, Ratha made several rasping snarls that were almost barks.

The sounds had the effect she wanted. The striper's ears swiveled, the head came up, the eyes opened. Again her eyes sought the striper's gaze, and this time she captured it. The animal stiffened, as if about to fight, but snort and stamp as it would, the striper couldn't break Ratha's stare. It stilled to near immobility, only its hide shivering.

Ratha felt triumph strengthen her heartbeat and deepen her breathing. She was so close; she could reach out and tap one of the horse's forelegs with a front paw.

Again came the rush of desire that threatened to propel her up onto the horse's shoulders, driving her teeth into its neck. In her imagination, she was already atop the striper, feeling the stiff upright mane bristle into the corners of her mouth. Part of her already felt the velvet-furred skin resist, stretch, and then tear through beneath the points of her fangs, her neck muscles pulling and twisting in just the right way so that her fangs would slip between the neck bones and skillfully separate them while the prey's blood flowed in pulses over her tongue . . . .

Outwardly Ratha shuddered, yet kept her eyes fixed on those of the horse while inwardly she swiped the feelings aside. No, such a fevered attack was not the way of the Named. She had fought this internal battle many times before, when she trained as a cub under Thakur, and later when she began her duties as a herder. Even when she culled herdbeasts, she would not let instinct run wild.

Ratha used her frustration and desire, pouring them out savagely through her eyes. The horse was now as still as if it were already in her killing embrace. The muscles and tendons atop her forelegs quivered with the need to drive her claws out and deep into flesh.

She lifted out of her crouch, rearing up on her hind paws to lay one foreleg almost gently over the horse's shoulders and up along the back of its neck. In spite of her care, the beast started, but before it could begin its escape flurry, Ratha slapped the other forepaw around the underside of its neck.

Now Ratha used her claws, but only enough to maintain her hold as she pushed backward with her hind feet to unbalance the striper and pull it over. She was so close to the horse now that she couldn't hold its gaze, but she no longer needed to. It was falling into the daze that doomed prey often assumed.

Instead of digging into the striper's nape with claws and teeth, Ratha used the pressure and friction of her pads combined with her weight and her experience in knowing exactly how and where to push in order to topple the beast.

As if in a trance, the striper sank to its knees. Ratha climbed farther onto it, using her weight to press the horse down onto its belly. She draped herself across the animal, one forepaw keeping the horse's forelegs, with their dangerous hooves, at a distance. She wrapped the other forepaw around the top of the horse's head, twisting it up so that the throat lay exposed.

Feeling the striper's heartbeat thudding through its ribs and into her own body, Ratha bent her head, jaws starting to open. The heart's beat was strong in the creature's neck, visibly jolting the skin over the great vessels and releasing a deep temptation in Ratha to bite deeply and hard.

Instead she opened her mouth to its full gape and set her teeth in position for the instinctive throat bite. With the horse's sweat-smell hot in her nose, she squeezed her eyes shut with the effort not to bite, feeling the jaw-closing muscles beneath her eyes and on the sides of her forehead tremble with the strain.

The onlookers, Thakur and the young cubs learning herding from him, had grown quiet, as if they sensed the conflict within her.

Slowly, deliberately, she pulled her head up, feeling the skin of her muzzle slide back over her teeth as her mouth closed. She swallowed the saliva that had flooded her mouth, staying atop the striper while the youngsters shrilled their praise and Thakur added his deeper note. Their cries sounded strangely muted to her, as if they were distant or her ears muffled.

She wanted to speak to them, saying, this is how you take down a striper, but a feeling stronger than just her heartbeat thudding in her chest held back her voice.

Something Ratha didn't understand made her give the horse's neck a gentle lick before she slipped her paws out from under its neck, lifted herself off its body, and quickly backed away. The striper lifted its head, then lurched to its feet. Before the horse took a step, Thakur and some older cubs surrounded it.

As Ratha watched them return the striper to its herd, she shook her pelt hard, as if she needed to shed it in preparation for resuming the mantle of Named clan leader. Today, she reminded herself, her role was more humble: guest herding instructor.

She struggled to rid herself of the confusion between ancient hunter and Named herder. Perhaps the feeling was stronger today because her leadership duties had taken her away from herding. Intense practice had brought back her skills, but not complete control of her instincts.

The cubs and their teacher were returning. Ratha lifted her head, now hearing individual voices instead of a general clamor.

"The males may be able to take down stripers, but I'll never be able to do that," said a discouraged little female voice.

"That is why I asked Ratha to show you the technique," Ratha heard Thakur say. He trotted toward her, his step springy, his whiskers fanning with pride. Scent and sight told Ratha that he had groomed himself especially well this morning. The metallic copper highlights in his fur shimmered in the sun. He had lost the leg feathering of his winter coat, and his slender limbs were clean, his body taut and spare.

His scent had a musky undertone, reminding Ratha that the Named mating season was not far away. She wanted to rub herself luxuriously alongside him and flop her tail across his back. Instead, she contented herself with an affectionate head-rub and turned to the discouraged youngster, finding her voice at last.

"Little one," she said to the cub, "it is true that the culling takedown is harder for female herders, especially with the stripers. We don't have as much weight or muscle as the males."

"Then how will I do it?"

Gently, Ratha explained how she depended on precision and balance instead of sheer force to bring a beast down.

"But you are special, clan leader," said the cub. "You aren't just a female, you're—"

"As a herder, I am no different than any of you," Ratha said, looking the cub in the eyes. "I had to struggle with takedowns when I was your age, even with the dapplebacks. And a three-horn stag chased me up a tree once."

"No, really?" the cub asked, wide-eyed, and others joined with her, wrinkling their noses in disbelief that a mere herdbeast could terrorize the Tamer of the Red Tongue, the Giver of the New Law, their clan leader.

"Yes, really. Ask Thakur."

The cubs clustered around their teacher, who answered, then shooed them all away, telling them to go practice staredowns with three-horn fawns until he called them.

Ratha watched them bumble and scramble away, wondering if they knew she got dung between her pads and muck on her coat, just like everyone else.

"Let them worship you a bit," Thakur said softly. "It helps them, especially the little females."

"They are doing well this season," Ratha mused. "It is hard to believe that it hasn't been that long since Meoran forbade any female cubs to train as herders."

"Except a certain one," Thakur answered.

Because you fought for me. You defied him to train me. You stood by me when I overthrew his tyranny.

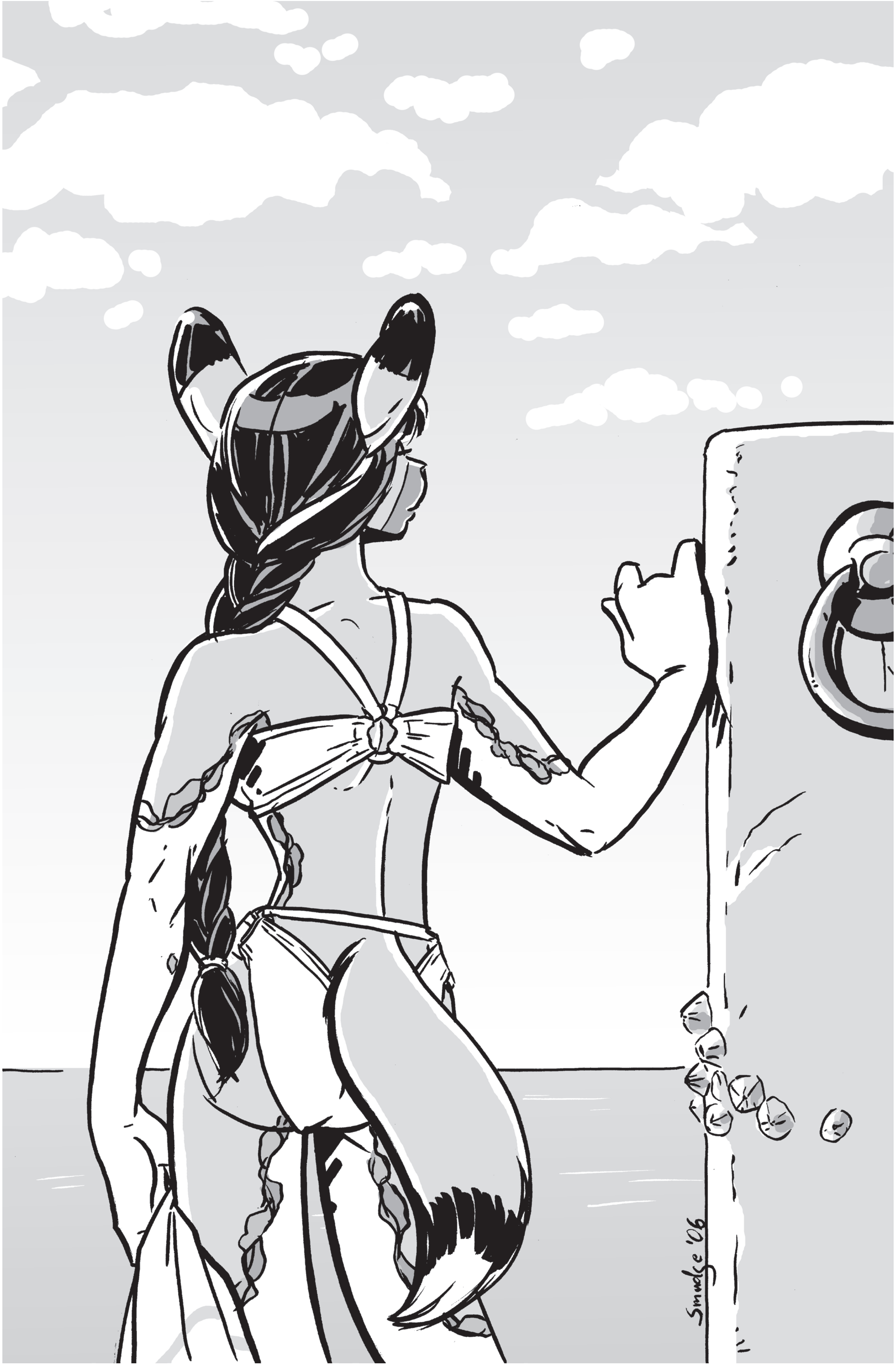
"I can answer the rest of the cubs' questions. Go take a nap on the sunning rock, yearling," he said, using his old name for her.

She had a new name for him, but one that she dared not use. Beloved.

Or, perhaps it wasn't so new.

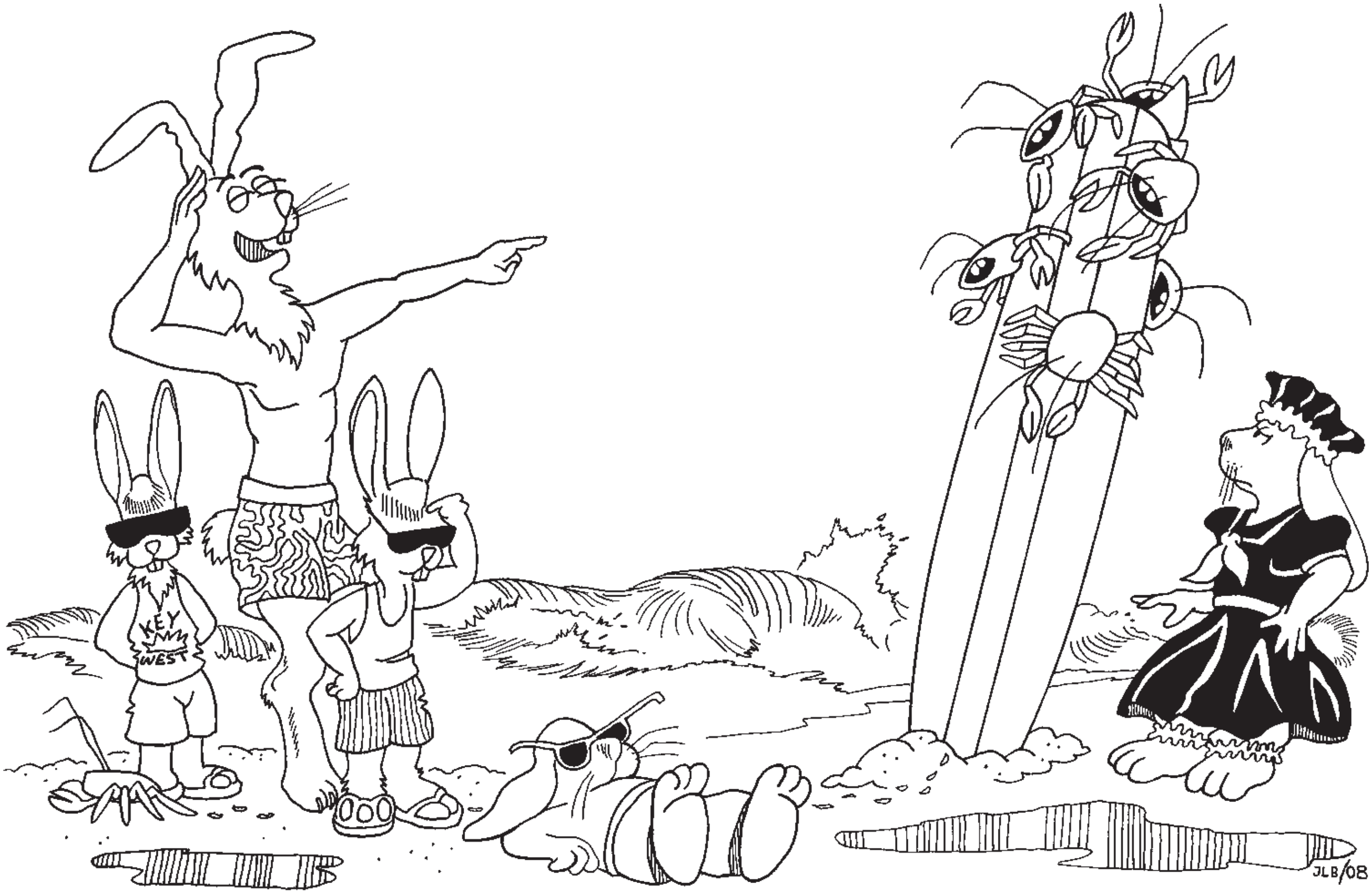
"May you eat of the haunch and sleep in the driest den, clan leader," he said formally, and returned to the cubs.

She looked after him, letting her whiskers droop slightly in a silent sigh, then decided to take his advice.


Smudge '06

Riddley Rabbit Hits the Beach

James L. Brandt



When the Surf Bunnies gather for their annual West Coast surfari, it's always a gas to see what radical moves the other bros have come up with since their last meet. Before the judging starts, there's plenty of time for practice. That's when the Surf Bunnies take the biggest chances in their routine. Everyone wants to show off and make the biggest splash, or perhaps avoid one, come to think of it.

The hairiest, gnarliest rider of them all is, without a doubt, the tall, lanky, rangy, skinny and rather scary-looking dude nicknamed The Wild Hare. With a reputation for making the most outrageous moves, the Hare made a habit out of freaking out the assembled furritude of Surf Bunnies at every event.

He also had a reputation for winning these competitions.

So, as you might imagine, everyone including The Wild Hare was more than a little curious when an odd-looking rock-maple-paneled VW Microbus, carrying two of the most ancient boards anyone had ever seen, trundled on into the parking lot.

"Get a load of that!" one of the Surf Bunnies commented to a friend. "I didn't know they ever made a woody bus!"

"They didn't," another replied. "It's gotta be custom-built."

"Must be the grand-pappy of the Rabbit," his friend replied, staring widely at the unlikely vehicle.

Out of the wood-sided little VW camper stepped a pair of white lop rabbits, dressed as if they'd just come off the set of the old musical *South Pacific,* or something. But, it wasn't just anybunny, it was our intrepid bradeen Riddley Rabbit and his girlfriend Beckky. They headed for the sand with their beach bags over their shoulders, carefully balancing their boards above their heads, each one four times larger than the bunny beneath it.

As they padded past the bemused crowd, someone made the obvious comment.

"You two just *gotta* be from back east!"

"Yup," Riddley answered simply, expressionless behind his huge pair of Ray-Ban sunglasses.

"We just like doing things a little bit differently," Beckky chimed in, cracking a smile.

"Different?" another Surf Bunny commented. "Not so much from back east, dude. You two look like you're back from another century."

"Another century?" Beckky observed, turning around to look back at their VW woody. "I guess we are. Mid-twentieth century, I'd fancy."

"Hey, I was Old School," Riddley maintained, "back before Old School was cool."

At that point the Wild Hare approached, the crowd parting ahead of him. The long, tall rabbit towered over the much smaller warren of surf bunnies grouped around him. He had a fiery, almost crazed look in his eyes and displayed a jagged, toothy grin beneath the kinky whisker bristle upon his muzzle.

"Man," he proclaimed, "there just ain't no way you're gonna keep up with us on those antique boards. What the heck is that old schlong? The nose looks like an egg!"

"I'll have you know," Riddley maintained, "that we have won competitions on these very same planks, and recently, too!"

"They really jazz the glass," Beckky assured the Hare.

"Competitions?" he retorted. "Like where, dude? Can't be too many on Lake Michigan!"

"You'd be surf-prized," Riddley quipped. "Just watch me ride."

"No," The Wild Hare replied, jerking a thumb toward his chest. "You just watch *me* ride, 'cause I'm due up next. I'll show you some carving what'll pop your shades right off of your head!"

He turned and ran back toward the surf, grabbing his own board as he did so. Most of the beach crowd paused to watch, because the faithful knew that whenever the Wild Hare was on the waves, it was guaranteed to be quite a performance.

The Wild Hare paddled out, and by good luck, or acquired skill, spotted a real good set forming almost immediately. As he rose up on his board to stand and ride the surf, he became confident enough to start hot-dogging, dancing up to the nose and back in sudden, herky-jerky, exaggerated motions.

"He looks like somebody plugged his cotton tail into a light bulb socket," Beckky observed from her spot on the shore, fully astonished at the Wild Hare's performance.

"Naw," one of the nearby Surf Bunnies replied, "That's just his style. Likes to fake like he's gonna wipe out big time. He always hams it up just before he goes like banzai Pipeline."

Off shore, the reef out there was around three feet under the water. The surf was waist- to head-high on the Wild Hare, and really clean. The wave he caught was a right, around chest-high, that hit the reef with a lot of power. The lanky rabbit went straight down the line for around seventy yards, no turns, all trim, and gyrating back and forth on his board for the whole ride.

Riddley muttered something underneath his breath and began walking away toward the spot in the sand where he'd stuck his own board. Beckky watched him go, but quickly returned her attention to the Wild Hare when one of the Surf Bunnies cried out.

"He's goin' for it! Here comes the big drop!"

As the Wild Hare crouched low on his board, the huge curl forming behind overtook him, completely enveloping the risk-taker rabbit in a wall of water. But, just as the big foam began to well up, and Beckky was convinced she was going to see his unoccupied surfboard pop up through the wave, the Wild Hare emerged from the tube, cranked the bottom turn, trimmed out to the shoulder and kicked out of the wave with all the Surf Bunnies on shore cheering, applauding and, in general, going nuts.

The Wild Hare waved to his faithful, wiggling his hips and shaking his knees, as if shivering in mock terror, having survived a real close shave.

"I wonder if his parents named him Elvis," Beckky observed.

"He always looks like he's about to go in the water any second," one of the Buns explained enthusiastically, "but he never does!"

Riddley was acting unimpressed. He continued mumbling and fiddling around with his own board. Nobunny could figure out why. There wasn't much to adjust. It had only one fin.

Finally, he dragged his long board into the water and paddled out, not even bothering to remove his shades.

The Wild Hare paddled back to shore, and as he carried his board out of the water, he received the anticipated hero's welcome from an admiring crowd. He paused as he walked past Beckky and asked.

"Where's your pint-sized poser?"

"Just about to begin," Beckky told him, pointing out across the water. "Take a look."

As the day would have it, Riddley caught an excellent wave as well. Smooth, and rolling with white spray, it looked right out of a travel agency postcard, picturesque but for the bizarre little white lop rabbit in a pair of big yellow jams that matched his surfboard, standing up on top. His flapping ears were trailing like two ends of a giant white scarf.

It looked to Beckky like one of his typical runs, until suddenly, he began hopping around.

"What's he doing?" somebody called out. "He's gonna lose his balance!"

"I've never seen him do anything like *that*!" Beckky admitted.

"It don't look too impressive," The Wild Hare claimed. "That sure ain't *my* style!"

"What's he trying to prove?" somebunny else wondered.

Indeed Riddley was behaving in a manner most absurd, bopping around on the board like he was an amateur firewalker on his first bed of coals. If it was winter, you'd swear Jack Frost was nipping at his toes. This stunt was not helping his ride as his meandering board began to wobble, falling off the crest, and taking the dancing rabbit along with it.

"Holy mackerel," one of the Surf Bunnies shouted in alarm, "if he goes any further back over the top of that wave he's gonna . . ."

Wipe out!

They tell me the board went one way and Riddley the other, flying through the air with the greatest of ease until rudely interrupted by a rather solid, sandy beach.

The great wave crashed, and then the water slid back, leaving our hero flat on his back in the disappearing foam. Riddley had landed in the shallow water, squarely on his buns, quite a stroke of luck because that is the best padded place on a lop rabbit. His board was driven into the sand, not too far away, as if it were the Sword in the Stone accompanying its vanquished knight.

The Wild Hare began laughing hysterically.

Beckky and the Surf Bunnies ran over to where Riddley had crashed, just after his perfect wave had done the same.

As soon as she was sure that Riddley was intact and undamaged, Beckky turned her attention toward his surfboard. There on the very top of it were a dozen bright eyes and curious antennae, peering out of flat, red, clamshell-like bodies, supported by spidery legs and pairs of sharp, snapping chopper claws, all clinging to Riddley's schlong like creeping vines. It was clear that these little buggers ruined Riddley's ride.

As he finally raised his dazed head, crooked Ray-Bans still somehow perched drunkenly upon his muzzle, our hero looked upward, turning to face his surf board.

"I said the Wild Hare rode like a crackpot," Riddley hollered at the clump of crustaceans gathered on his board, "not a crab pot!"

THE END

P.S. Hodaddy Brandt would like to thank http://www.riptionary.com

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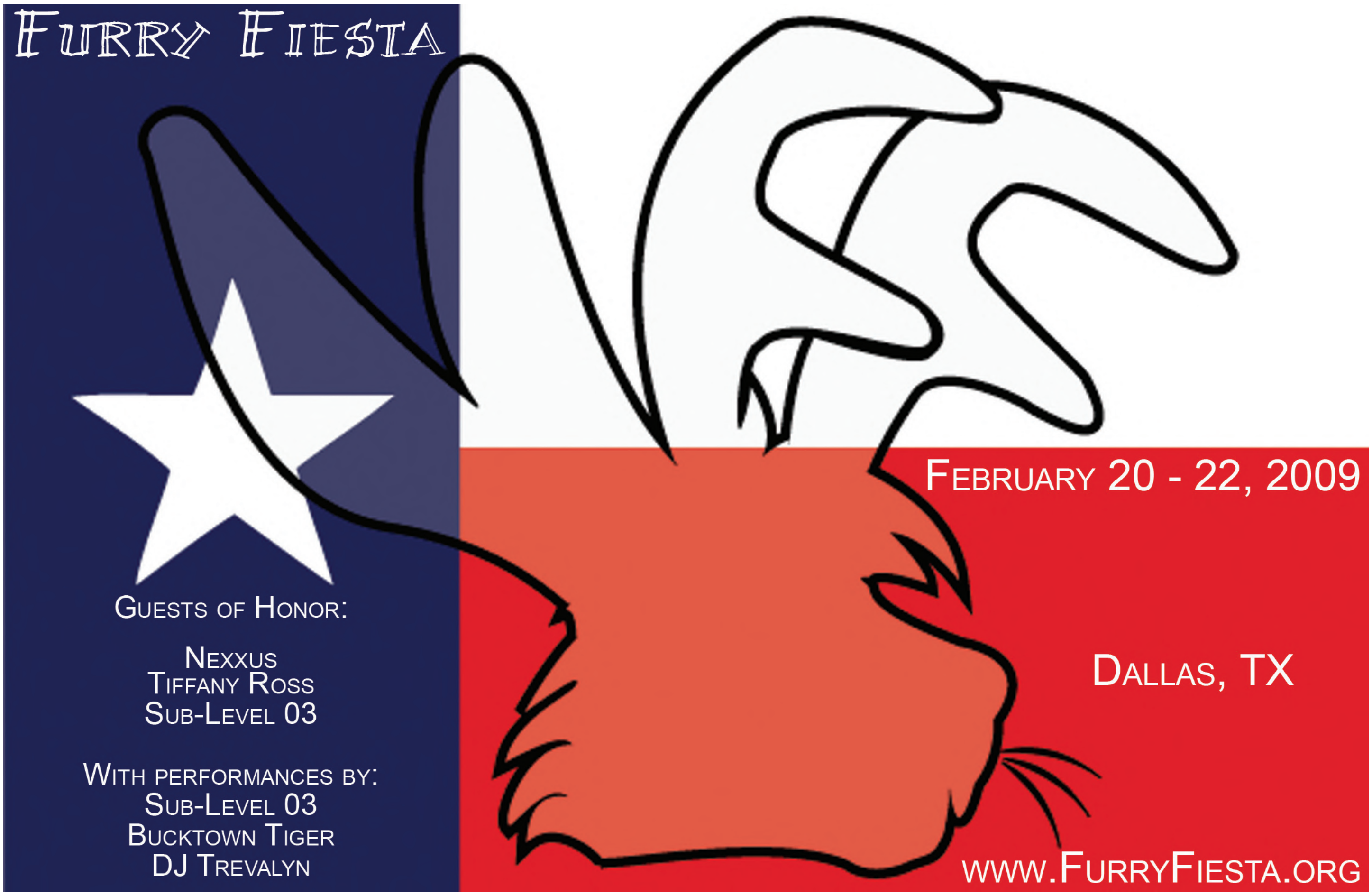

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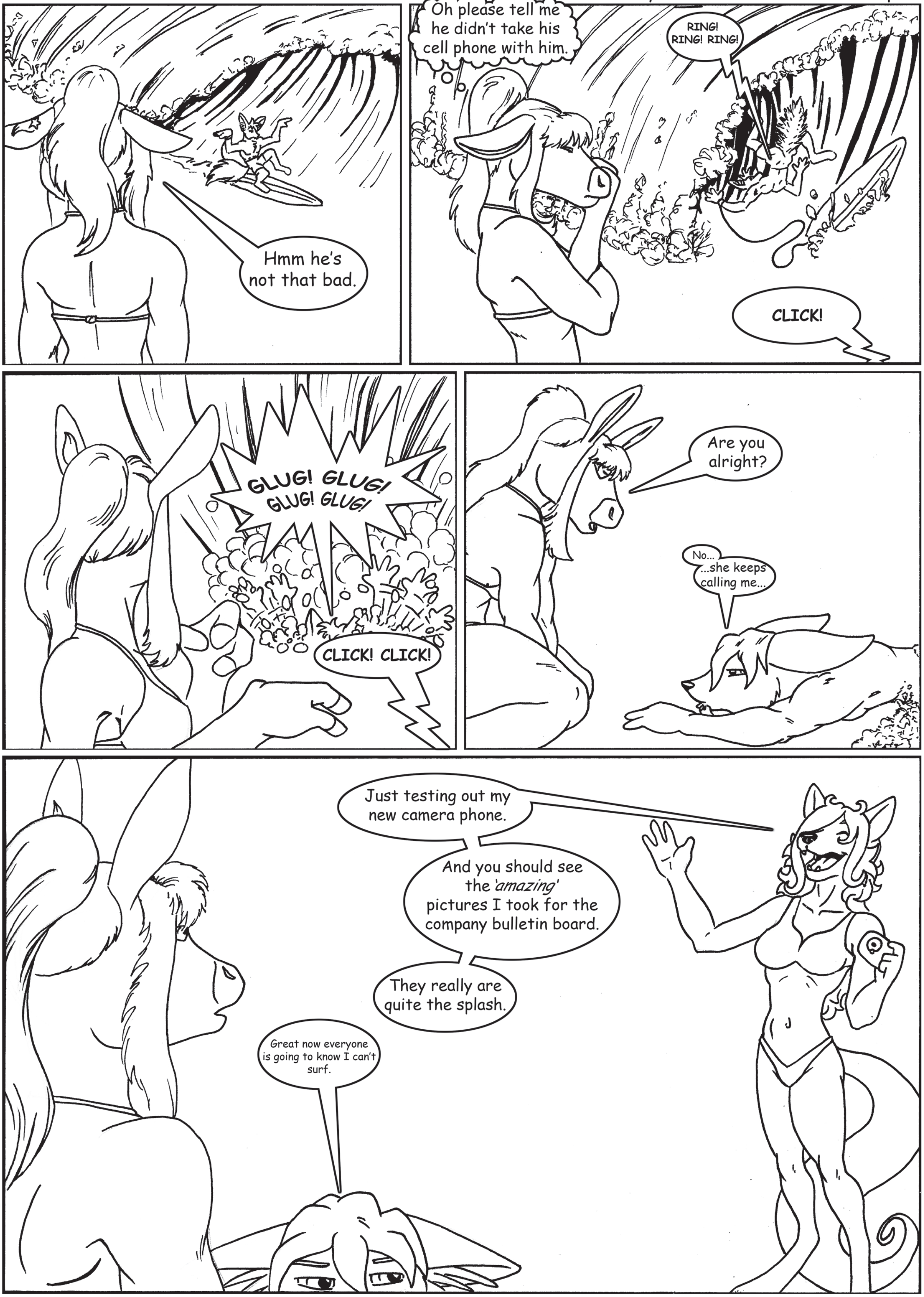
Why Rick?! - Further Confusion - Spoof

Written by: Xenos & Charles 'Fox' Champion


Hmm he's not that bad.
Oh please tell me he didn't take his cell phone with him.
RING! RING! RING!
CLICK!
GLUG! GLUG! GLUG! GLUG!
CLICK! CLICK!
Are you alright?
No... ...she keeps calling me...
Just testing out my new camera phone.
And you should see the *'amazing'* pictures I took for the company bulletin board.
They really are quite the splash.
Great now everyone is going to know I can't surf.

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THE CLAW POINT TUNA RIB FESTIVAL

GUNNER SCOTT

It's finally here! It's Friday, and only a half-hour more to go, thought Burnie, a gray tabby, as he went back to work polishing the brass fittings and plates on the bridge of a ship. Burnie was a Quartermaster third class and the second navigator stationed aboard the cutter *Pathway*. This was a 110-foot Island-class rescue cutter that operated out of Mark-West Harbor on the most western point of Caltrop Island.

When Burnie first arrived at his new post, he thought the next two years would be a tropical holiday. He dreamed of spending his days playing on the many sandy beaches, and his nights partying at one of the several holiday resorts that dotted the shoreline—all the while enjoying exotic drinks made with fresh fruit from the island's plantations.

What he didn't learn of before his arrival was that the island was also surrounded by heavy shipping lanes, large fishing beds, and unpredictable weather. Added to that was the fact the other heavy rescue cutter stationed there was very old and had been breaking down more often. This meant that the *Pathway,* and Burnie, had been very, very busy this year.

He had difficulty keeping his mind on his work today, because he had big plans for this evening. Tonight, he and some of his shipmates were heading off to the biggest party on the whole island, the Claw Point Tuna Rib Festival. It was a national tuna-rib cooking competition and carnival with live bands and beach games, all at Claw Point on the east side of the island. They had been planning this weekend for months. Each of them checked and re-checked the duty rosters, scanned the weather reports and pored over the ship's status reports. Over the last week and a half, they had been hearing the local news station reporting the arrival of chefs from around the world that would be cooking and competing at the festival. It had been driving their taste buds insane.

Pausing for a moment from polishing the brass trim around the front bridge window, Burnie looked down to where some of his friends were working on the forward main deck. There were the two raccoons, Chad and Shane, rapidly repainting the capstan. Although they came from different parts of the mainland, Shane from a big city in the north, and Chad, a farm boy from the south, they were rarely seen apart from each other. Chipping the paint from the front of the main gun mount was Chavez, the gunner's mate, a sickly-looking serval. Then, as always, were the two bosun's mates, one on each side of Chavez. "Boats", a muskrat, was on his left and "Boats Jr.", the weasel, was on his right. And they were doing what they loved best, taking turns yelling at Chavez at the tops of their lungs.

Burnie could see Chavez's expression as he tensed up from the verbal abuse. He then took a deep breath, relaxed, and went back to his pattern of nodding and quickening his pace in response to the overly loud commands from the two bosuns. As he watched, he wondered how much more mistreatment Chavez would be able to take before he snapped, and what a quick end to the bosuns it would be.

"I know what you're up to!" The sudden voice from behind him made him jump. He spun around to see his boss leaning on the chart table, looking at him. "Old Bo," or Petty Officer Swiney, was an old graying albatross, and the ships first navigator, as well as Burnie's department head.

"And I want to talk to you about that," Old Bo finished. Burnie put down his polishing rag and went to stand next to the chart table across from Old Bo.

"What do you mean, Boss?" Burnie asked hesitantly.

Old Bo slowly looked down at Burnie. "I know what you and your friends are planning . . ."

"But . . ." Burnie tried to interject.

". . . and," old Bo just continued, "I want to make some things clear. You do realize that we are on Bravo Two alert status. That means if we get a call, we've got one hour to have all hands back on board and ready to head out."

"I know that, but . . ." Burnie tried again.

"I also know," Old Bo still continued, "that Claw Point, which is where you were heading, is a wee bit more than an hour away from here."

"Well . . . yes." Burnie answered.

Old Bo briefly glanced at Burnie, and then gestured toward the radio. "You remember the weather report we logged earlier? Clear and sunny skies over the festival? There also was that storm heading south eighty miles east of here. It may not be much of a storm, but I happen to know that when a southbound storm hits that northern current out there, it stirs up quite a chop. I got a bad feeling about this one," he said, tapping on the chart next to them.

They both stood there, as teacher and student, looking over that chart, which showed the paths of currents and the effects of tides around the island. Suddenly, the quiet moment was cut by an extremely loud and vulgar outburst from outside.

They rushed to the forward window and looked down to the source of the commotion. The two bosuns were trying to out-do each other, getting their last digs and taunts in at

Chavez. Behind them, the two raccoons, Chad and Shane, scrambled to clear the tools from the deck.

"Then there are your friends," Old Bo said to Burnie. "They will be looking to you as the leader. Look after them and they will follow your lead. We are on alert, so don't start drinking."

Burnie cocked his head at Bo.

"One with dinner is OK," Old Bo answered his unasked question. "And one more after that, maybe. But no more than that. It's not worth the risk."

"What about Chavez?" Burnie asked. "We're the same rank. Why isn't he the leader?"

"No," replied Old Bo "He'll watch over them in his own way. But they will follow your lead. I've seen it in you."

Another burst of screaming erupted from below them. Burnie gestured to the scene below. "How long do you think Chavez will take that kind of abuse?"

Old Bo turned his back to the window. "I've talked with him about that on several occasions. He said he will take it, until he chooses not to."

Burnie, wide-eyed, took a step back at the thought.

"Come!" said Old Bo with a chuckle, "Let's get ready for muster."

Muster is a traditional ceremony aboard ships. As the crew formed into ranks with their own sections, operations, deck and engineering, the captain, Ms. White, a slender puma, and the XO, Mr. Hattchet, a bristling walrus, would stand before the formation. They received the evening reports from each department, and then passed out orders and the watch list for the weekend. They gave a final reminder of the ship's alert status, and then saluted each of the department heads. Finally, the department heads smartly turned to their sections, saluted and said, "Dismissed." This started a mad scramble as the crew left for the weekend.

Less than twenty minutes after muster, a group gathered under the palms next to Burnie's car. All had cleaned up and changed out of their uniforms. As he approached, Burnie took a head count of the group around his car. Chavez, Chad, and Shane were there, as well as Ef-fay, a droopy basset, who worked in the engineering department as the ship's oiler. As he got there, Chad gave a wave and headed back towards the ship.

"Where's Chad going?" Burnie asked a sad-looking Shane.

"He's got watch this weekend with Cookie. He decided to stay here so we won't have to cut things short just to get him back by morning," Shane said with a sniff.

Burnie quickly spun around and shouted "*Yo*! Chad! Want us to bring you back anything?"

Chad gave them all a big grin and hollered back, "Yeah! Bring me back a good story!" Then he trotted back to the ship.

With that, Shane seemed to brighten up. He turned to the others, "Can you believe what Cookie served up today? Chad said he was going to give him what-for this weekend."

"Beans three days in a row," Ef-fay chimed in.

"I couldn't touch 'em," Chavez added. "All I could think about was tuna ribs. Boy, am I going to get my fill tonight!"

"You said it!" Shane blasted back. "Last night when the news showed the tuna ribs being delivered by the truckful, I almost started licking the TV."

"Well then, instead of standing here drooling on ourselves, let's roll!" Burnie sounded off. His stomach had been growling for ribs for the last week. They each threw the blankets they had with them into the back of the station wagon and piled in.

"What's the first stop?" asked Shane, who was riding shotgun.

"Well," said Burnie as he pulled out of the base parking lot, "First we need to stop at Al's for some mango shakes, because it's . . . Ef-fay's turn!" he yelled over his shoulder to a chorus of cheers.

"Yeah s'right," Ef-fay meekly agreed.

Two blocks away form the harbor they pulled into what looked like an abandoned burger stand. This was usually a popular joint, but tonight there was not a soul to be seen. They cautiously pulled up to the drive-through window, and everyone jumped when a large wolf suddenly stuck his head out. "Sorry boys, the grill's shut down," he said with a toothy grin.

"OK . . . is the mixer still up, Al?" Burnie asked. Al gave a nod. "Then give us four extra-large mangos for the road."

"Extra-large, eh?" Al asked while scanning the car. "Whose turn is it today?" Ef-fay passed up the cash, and as Al stuffed it into the till he called back towards Ef-fay, "Now don't forget to make it an extra-large when it's their turns, OK?" With that, he turned to the blenders.

"Hey, Al," Burnie called though the window, "Where's your crew, and where is everybody? This place is a ghost town."

"They've gone to the festival," Al answered over his shoulder. "I sent my staff to help my cousin Ed. He's running one of the booths there. You guys should look him up. He has a honey-mango sauce he smothers his tuna ribs in, it will blow you over. First he . . ."

"Stop! Stop!" pleaded Burnie. "You're killing us. I haven't eaten all day, and I've been waiting for some barbecue ribs like those all week." This got a laugh out of everyone, even Al.

As Al passed out the shakes, he told them where to find his cousin and wished them a safe journey.

"Now," Burnie said as he juggled with the large cup and the steering wheel, "we're going north to pick up Sandy."

More cheers erupted from the car.

Sandy was Burnie's girlfriend, who had moved out to the island a few months ago and had found a job at the North Point Resort. He had been amazed at how his previously very shy girl had opened up around these new friends, and was getting along with them just like she was part of the crew.

They cruised north along the beachfront road for about an hour and a half to the resort Sandy worked at. They saw her out front, blanket in hand, waving as they pulled up. She was an all white short-hair kitty, dressed in a tropical print summer dress. As Burnie stopped, Shane jumped out, giving Sandy the front seat. He took the blanket from her and tossed it in to the back with the rest. He then climbed in behind her, shoving Chavez to the middle of the back seat.

"Shake?" someone asked as they all offered her the now-empty cups, another round of laughter erupting from everyone at this running joke.

"Thanks, boys," Sandy laughed, "but tonight I'm on a diet of mai-tais and tuna ribs." This set off a wave of jokes and laughter that lasted most of the trip, as they made their way down the west side of the island.

Soon the conversations ebbed and flowed as Burnie glided down the winding road. He cocked an ear and caught parts of the chatter. Sandy was leaning over the chair telling Chavez about one of her new friends she would like him to meet. Shane and Ef-fay were arguing, yet again, about who had the worst job on the ship.

Then the car got really quiet. Burnie started to wonder when he caught it, the faintest hint of that sweet mouth-watering aroma of barbecue tuna ribs. The silence only lasted a moment longer before the car erupted with everyone talking and yelling at once about ribs—how many they were going to eat, how fast, and with what.

Burnie pulled the car off the highway and onto the narrow road that led to the festival, and then stopped. The road was completely backed up with cars bumper to bumper for several miles all the way to the festival. As they inched down the road, they began to see the lights of the carnival. Then they could faintly hear the music from the bands. They also began to check out the crowds who were also heading in the same direction. All the time, that overwhelming sweet, sweet smell of barbecue tuna ribs got stronger and stronger. All this sent waves of anticipation through the car.

"Let's see if they are covering any of this on the *Frank and Otis Show*," Sandy said as she turned on the radio.

"—ag and some of her well-known friends from Double-Z Studios were seen today arriving at the Lilly Plato Airport. Do you think they all were heading to the Claw Point Barbecue Rib Fest, Otis?"

"Well, Frank, if they are, it's going to be one wild party—"

"Hey! If she's here, I'm so getting a picture with her!" shouted Chavez from the back.

Then Ef-fay leaned in. "Yeah, it's a good thing you brought your camera then."

"Yeah. Wait. *No*!" Chavez wailed as he fumbled through his pockets. This was met with howls of laughter for everyone else in the car.

They painstakingly made their way to the entrance of the parking lot, where troops of cub and kit scouts had the jobs of collecting the parking fees and directing traffic through the maze of parked cars. By this time the delicious smell of barbecue tuna ribs had them dizzy. They were so close they could almost sniff out the different sauces and seasonings that were used. There were hints of fruit marinades and chili rubs. Burnie was starting to go cross-eyed at the thought of those wonderful flavors.

He had just paid the fee and was pulling forward when Chavez shouted, "Burnie, stop the car!" He turned to Shane. "Do you see that?"

Shane looked over, and then suddenly leaned out the window. "Oy! You! Scout! Come here." He barked out.

The little scout hesitated and then jogged over. Shane quietly said something and the scout almost exploded with enthusiasm. He spun and yelled to the other scouts. "Mike, Sam, put this car in section A next to the front gate. I saw a car just pull out of there."

They were pointed to a spot much closer to the main gate by frantically waving and smiling scouts. Burnie turned to look at a smug-looking Shane.

"That was the group of scouts that came by the ship about a month ago," explained Shane. "Chavez put them all in battle armor and let them play on the deck gun. I think they had fun."

They were directed to a parking spot two stalls away from the main gate by grinning scouts. "Well, guys," Burnie said as he put the car into park, "let there be ribs." With that, they all scrambled out of the car.

The group stood just outside the main gate basking in the smell of hundreds of tuna ribs being cooked, waiting for Chavez and Ef-fay to catch up. As they did, Burnie turned to his friends, "Men, this is what we came for!" He reached over and took Sandy by the hand. "Let's move out!"

Just as the five friends crossed under the main gate, four pagers went off. Chavez snatched the pager off his belt and looked at the number. "This can't be! It's got to be those bosun twits messing with us. I say we ignore it, say we didn't get the page . . ."

Burnie was looking at the number on the pager. Old Bo was on radio watch tonight and he knew they wouldn't get paged if it wasn't really important. "Hold up, guys. We got to call in on this. I'll see why Old Bo's buzzing us." He went to a nearby pay phone and called the ship, while the rest of the crew stood there in shock. "Hello, boss, this is Burnie. What's up?"

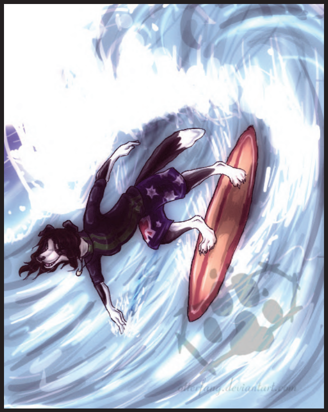
"I thought I'd give you boys a chance and buzz you before calling the captain," explained Old Bo, "Here's what's going on . . ."

Two minutes later Burnie slowly hung up the phone and turned to his still frozen friends. "Here's the ugly. A boat is taking on water forty miles east of Pounce Inlet. The seas are too rough for the small boats to go out, so they're sending us. We got to leave now! Shane, plan B! Everyone else follow me!"

They ran for the car while Shane ducked right. Burnie

Surf Pup

Flying



Crush

Wipe Out

was starting up the car while people were still piling in. He pulled out then backed up to the front of the gate. Chavez kicked the door open as Shane came running up holding a rack of ribs. As soon as he got in, Burnie put it in gear and started off. Shane then started to pull the ribs apart by hand and was passing them out. It was a small rack, so there were only about two ribs each.

"These are the best," said Ef-fay, as he licked the sauce from his fingers.

"Not really," Shane replied, "This guy was right by the gate and didn't have anyone in line at his booth. The really good vendors had huge lines in front of theirs. Can you imagine how good those would be?"

"I don't care." Burnie spoke out. "We came for ribs, and we got ribs. I think these are just great."

By the time they hit the main road and turned east, every bone had been licked clean. Luck was with them; there was almost no traffic heading away from the festival, as they sped off into a dark horizon.

Burnie had led them there, he would see to it that they got back in time. He knew that together they would rescue that sinking boat, and they would all come back safe. Then someday, he would lead them on another adventure.

Fin

Based loosely on the crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Drummond, *WPB1323.*

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FC’09

SECRETS

Matthew Joseph Harrington

Diana found the clothes she'd left earlier, dried off, and changed, then went up the beach to see what was going on. The current was getting cold early this year, so this was her last chance to visit the boardwalk for a while. At least she'd arranged things so she'd have almost all day. She combed her hair as she walked, then remembered to put the comb in her pocket.

Arne found a parking spot, fed coins into the meter—no gloves, thank you for that much, Lyndon!—and tried to keep an open mind as he headed down the street. Getting out and mingling with people had been advice from a self-help book, and it sounded lame, but it was better than having to find a new shrink whenever he lost his temper with one. At least he didn't know where the book's author lived.

People were tall these days, and he was resigned to it, but they seemed to particularly emphasize it at the beach. He managed not to give anyone a mean look as he made his way to the boardwalk buildings, but when one small crowd passed around him, all talking and nobody listening, it was like being in a forest, without the virtue of being quiet. He turned in at the first entrance.

It was the game arcade. He came back out immediately, blinking and shaking his head. Most people could develop selective deafness to deal with noise. He was not most people.

The street was even more crowded up ahead. He turned and went the long way around the arcade building, coming up on the boardwalk from the beach side. There were people there too, but they didn't make crowds, and were interested in the water or the sun.

Most were, anyway. There was one girl in jeans and a faded shirt, staring in helpless bafflement at the cheerful chaos the boardwalk was becoming. She was almost as fair as he was, barely taller than he was, and not a weakling like most of the women he saw: solid, and well-covered over that. Naturally nobody else was looking twice at her.

Arne thought she might be broke. He hadn't been able to tell that for sure since 1965, but she had a look to her like she didn't know what to do. As he went over to her, he saw that she was barefoot.

She'd forgotten how complicated it all was. The roller coasters had started up, and she was watching them when she heard a man say, "You hungry?"

She looked around, and saw someone who didn't act like anyone else she'd seen today. In a moment she'd realized what it was: he was utterly unafraid of the sea. She smiled at him. "Usually. Are you?"

He smiled back. He had beautiful teeth. "Usually. Not much now, but I could stand some breakfast. Care to join me?"

"That sounds nice," she said.

"Let's get you some sandals first, so they'll let us into the restaurant," he said.

She had the darkest blue eyes he'd ever seen.

She didn't know her shoe size. For someone who'd been down and out that long, she smelled amazingly clean. She didn't have that funny smell of someone who wasn't eating right, either— and he knew that smell better with every year.

The restaurant wasn't remotely fancy, but the man at the counter looked over her clothes and started to give her the hairy eyeball. Then he saw Arne looking at him, flinched, and said, "May I take your order?"

"What's good?" Arne said, politely since the man was showing respect.

"Seafood platter."

"No fish," she said, with emphasis.

Arne was a great believer in protein. "Bacon cheeseburger?" he suggested.

"Is it good?" she said.

Arne looked at the man, who nodded hastily. "Bacon cheeseburger, and I'll have the seafood platter," Arne said. He really wasn't all that hungry, as he'd parked up in the hills the night before, but he could always find some room. He thought she might be uncomfortable eating alone. "Two—" he noticed what brand of cola they had, and it was the stuff that made his teeth squeaky—"lemonades."

The seafood platter really was excellent. Apparently so was the burger. She had three. She also had his fries along with her own, and two more lemonades. When she was done eating, she was flushed and cheerful, and giving him the eye, as if she were getting ready to hit on him.

If that was all he'd wanted he could have stayed home. He wasn't here to be a predator. "You want to look at the shops?" he said.

"Yes," she said, nodding vigorously.

Arne left a hundred-percent tip. The food had been good and the service proper.

"What do I call you?" Diana asked him.

He seemed startled. “Arne,” he said.

“I’m Diana.”

They had passed a candy shop and a shooting gallery, and now Arne stopped short, turned, and marched over to a bench where a man was sitting. “What kind of comment was that?” he said to the man.

The man was bigger than Arne, and fatter, but seemed peaceable. “Involuntary,” he said, looking surprised.

“Arne, what’s going on?” she said.

“I think this man insulted you.”

The man said, “Insul—I don’t think we’re having the same conversation. I thought you were sore because I seemed to be paying too much attention to her.”

“Oh, you said ‘Woof’ because you think she’s pretty?” Arne said.

“No, I was watching her because she’s pretty, and I said ‘Whuff’ when she turned to the light because all the air went out. And because I didn’t think anyone could hear me. You must have ears like a bat.”

“Not quite,” Arne said. “I apologize for wasting your time.”

“I’m sorry I distracted you,” the man said, smiling.

Arne didn’t seem to know how to walk away, so she took his arm and pulled. He went along with her, then led her into a shop where they sold clothes.

Diana clearly hadn’t been shopping in a long time. He had to point things out for her, then show her the changing room. She seemed to be uniformly delighted with everything. He ended up buying her a black T-shirt with a design of bubbles all up the front, and the only jeans in the shop that fit her, which were four different colors: red, yellow, blue, and green, each making up a quarter. She changed into the new clothes, and when they got outside she threw the old ones in the trash. Then she grabbed him and hugged him and kissed him.

There was something funny about her tongue. Before he could figure out what, she broke off and said, “Oh, what happened to your back?” She’d felt the scar.

“A man shot me, a long time ago.” That poisoner Reid was long dead, and good riddance.

“Does it hurt?”

“No, I just don’t like remembering. Want to try the bumper cars?”

“All right.”

She was really good at the bumper cars. Incredibly good. Whenever he hit someone, she hit the other side of his target a moment later, and when someone was aiming at him she always knocked the incoming car off course. They went back three more times, until they were asked to leave because nobody else would go on while they were there.

Arne took her to get some ice cream. “What flavor?” he said.

She had no idea. “You pick.”

He looked very pleased, and told the girl, “Chocolate for her, vanilla for me, both on sugar cones.”

It was awfully cold, but good. “This is wonderful,” she told him when they were outside.

“Can’t go wrong giving a woman chocolate,” he said. He kept his from dripping by licking all around the edges. He had to keep turning it. That seemed like a lot of trouble, so Diana simply opened her mouth, put the scoop in, closed her mouth, and took the ice cream out, slurping away the melted stuff as she did.

People kept stopping to look at them, then going in and getting ice cream. One skinny woman who was going past halted, stared, and exclaimed, “What are you people, porn stars?”

She hastened away before Arne could finish saying, “No.” Arne turned to exchange a look with Diana. Neither of them thought of anything to say.

“Want to go splash in the waves?” She obviously didn’t have a bathing suit.

“I can’t!” Diana said.

That was surprising. “I’m no great swimmer, but I can teach you,” he said.

“I can swim. I mean I can’t today.”

“Oh.” He tried to avoid religions. “Roller coaster?”

It was a lot scarier than she’d expected. Arne noticed, and took her on different rides.

Later he took her to eat at the same place. The man there was still scared of Arne, and behaved very nicely.

They went to the beach to watch the sun set.

“Oh, the tide’s almost out!” Diana realized.

Arne stared at it, then whirled to look to the east. While Diana was still trying to think of an excuse, he said, “I have an appointment up in the hills. Hang on.” He dug into his pockets and gave her all the cash he had left. “You take care, honey, okay?” He kissed her fiercely, then fled.

He was awfully quick.

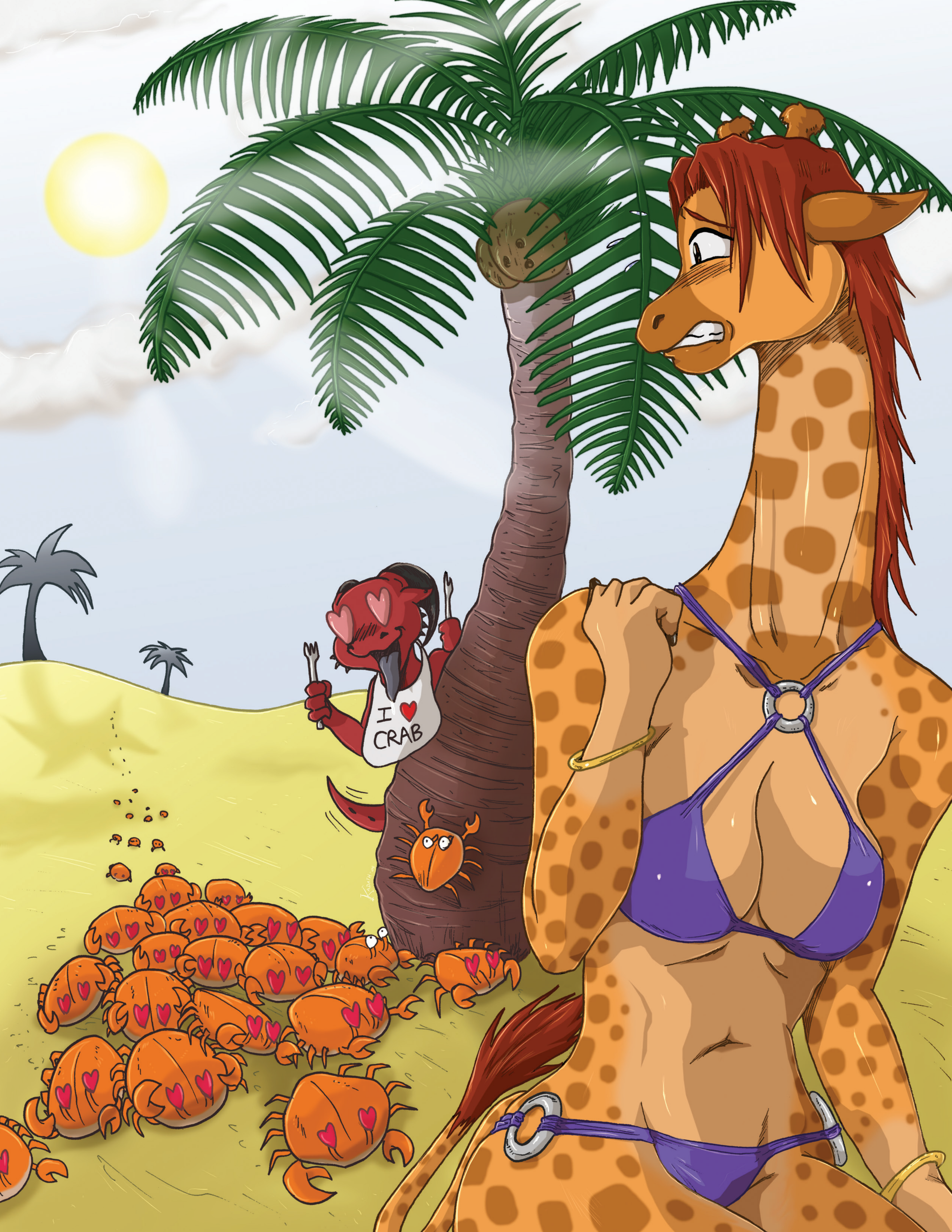
She reached the hiding place under the pier as the sun disappeared, and left the money with her clothes before jumping into the water. She was just in time.

Arne was sweet, but he’d never have understood about her.

She swam out past the point and rose to the surface with a whip of her tail to watch the moon rise.

He was so sweet, though, she was sure he could find someone to be happy with.

High on a hill over the bay, a pale wolf howled, all alone.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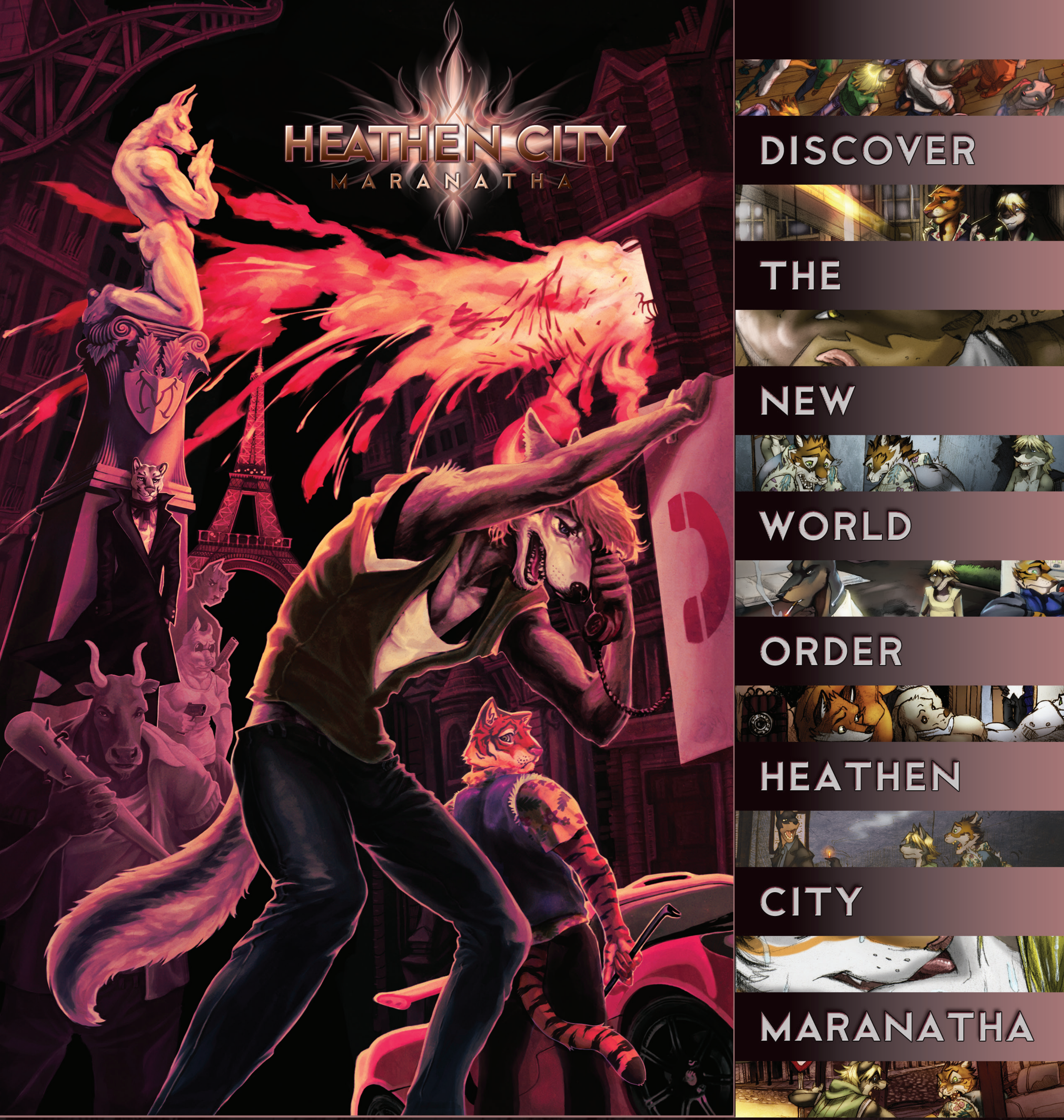
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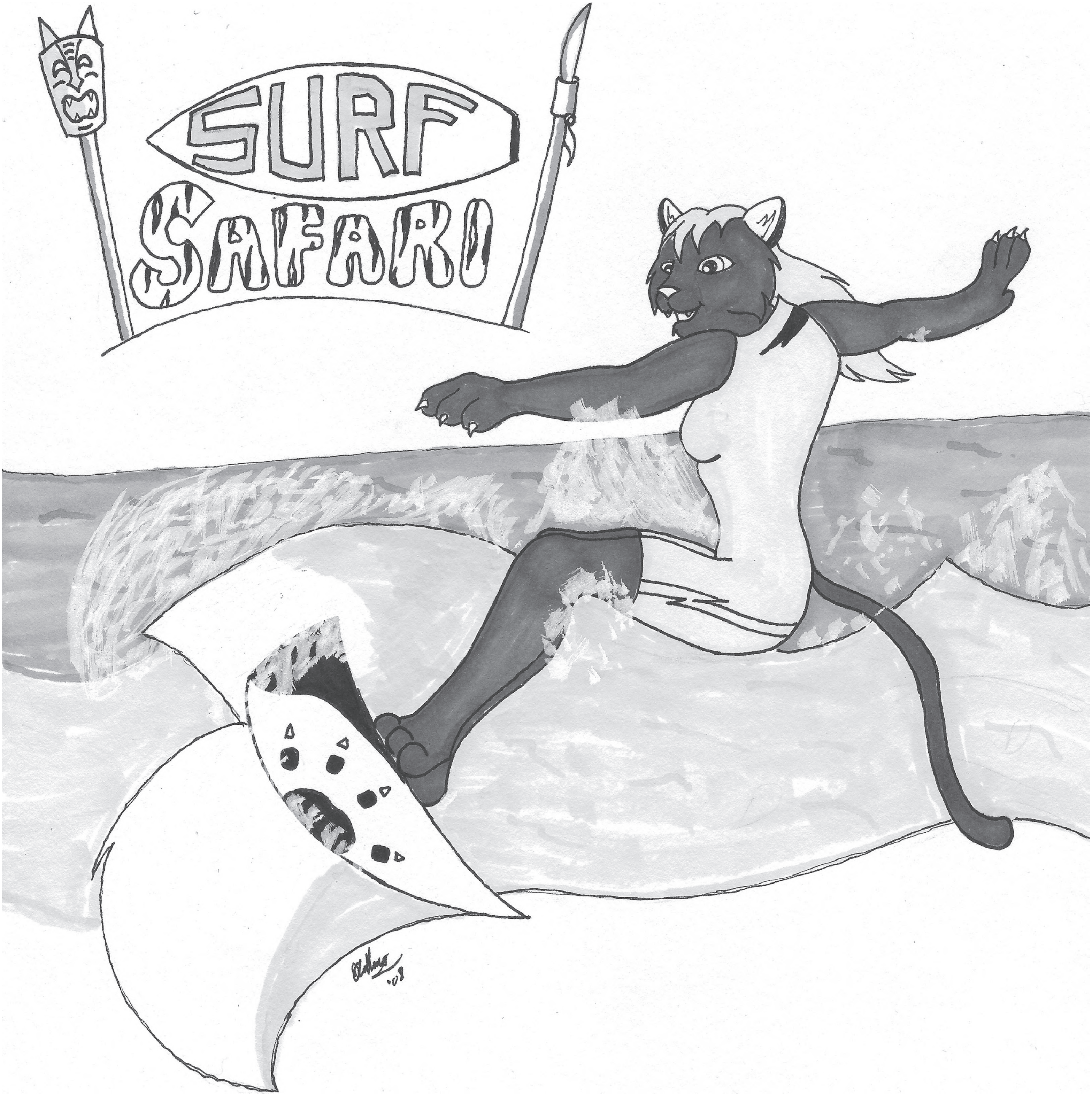
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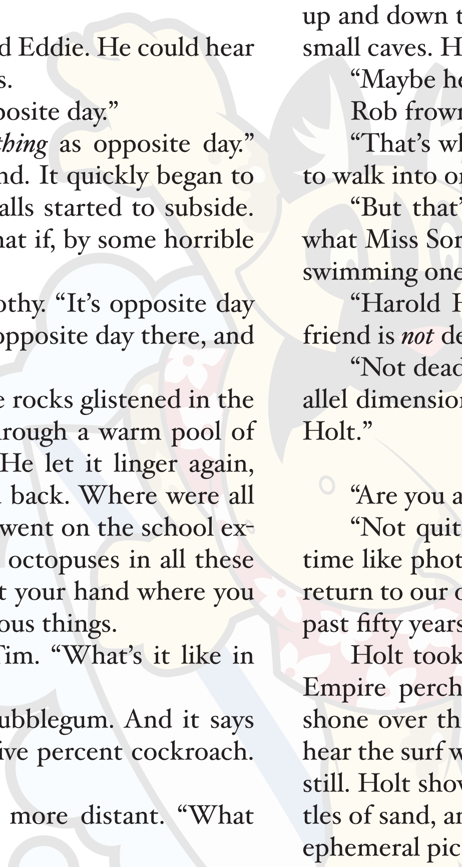

I can swim laps, watch me swim laps." Rob looked out to sea uncertainly. "I can do it any time I like."

"I already swum laps when you weren't looking," said Timothy.

"You can't swim laps in the sea," said Eddie. He could hear them arguing all the way from the rocks.

"Yeah?" said Timothy. "Well it's opposite day."

"No such thing, there's no such *thing* as opposite day." Rob stopped digging his hole in the sand. It quickly began to fill with underground water and the walls started to subside. He'd heard this again and again, but what if, by some horrible chance, it really *was* . . . ?

"Shows what you know," said Timothy. "It's opposite day in America. I've been there, they have opposite day there, and it's opposite day now."

The squishy things that lived in the rocks glistened in the afternoon. Eddie dragged his finger through a warm pool of water, then snatched it back quickly. He let it linger again, wiggled it like a worm and then pulled back. Where were all the blue-ringed octopuses? When they went on the school excursion Miss Sorenson said there were octopuses in all these rockpools. You weren't supposed to put your hand where you couldn't see it because of all the poisonous things.

Rob was looking suspiciously at Tim. "What's it like in America?"

"They have cinnamon-flavoured bubblegum. And it says on Mars Bars they're allowed to have five percent cockroach. It's the law."

Rob's face was looking more and more distant. "What else?"

Timothy thought for a moment. "Kids can smoke."

Rob and Timothy forgot about America when they heard a great splash behind them. They looked over to the rocks and saw Eddie wasn't there any more. A slight thrashing noise reached them, but they never saw Eddie fall. In the dead summer air they couldn't be sure anything had happened at all. They ran over to the rocks and found only the empty rockpools. Timothy pushed his toe into one of the mysterious limpet-like things, half plant and half animal, and watched it squirt a little jet of water into the air.

They heard wheels crunching in the gravel up by the road. A patrol car stopped by the beach and a blue figure rose into view. Even from this distance Rob and Timothy had a churn in their stomachs. They could see the policeman was not happy.

"Hey, kids! The beach is closed."

"We can't go," said Rob, "our friend's got lost."

The policeman came down the side of the beach avoiding the sand and water. They could hear his shoes scuffing against the salty rocks. "Okay, you're not in trouble," he said. "I want you to tell me exactly what happened."

Rob told the whole story, being sure to leave out the important things he knew about the Americans. Timothy stayed quiet, but Rob said enough to worry the policeman. He strolled up and down the rocks, looking down to the surf and into the small caves. He couldn't see any sign of a missing boy.

"Maybe he's caught in a rip," said Timothy.

Rob frowned. "He can't be, he was on the rocks."

"That's where they get you from. You'd have to be stupid to walk into one."

"But that's what people do!" said Rob. "Didn't you hear what Miss Sorenson said about that prime minister who went swimming one day and never came back?"

"Harold Holt?" the policeman said with a frown. "Your friend is *not* dead."

"Not dead," said Rob. "Reincarnated as a zombie in a parallel dimension. Tim reckons that's what happened to Harold Holt."

"Are you a zombie?" Eddie asked.

"Not quite," said undead Harold Holt. "We are stuck in time like photographs, but we will age normally whenever we return to our own dimensions. I've only aged two weeks in the past fifty years."

Holt took the boy on a walk through their town, a little Empire perched on an never-ending beach. The glassy sun shone over this outpost at the end of the world. They could hear the surf washing up and down, though the water was dead still. Holt showed Eddie the palaces of driftwood and the castles of sand, and how the locals marked time by drawing huge, ephemeral pictures in the sand.

He took a piece of paper in one hand and a fountain pen in the other. He began to sketch the corner of a cube, labelling the sides with a tiny, intricate x, y and z.

"We exist in four dimensions," said Holt. "There are the three sides of the cube, the dimensions we readily perceive. And then there is the fourth, which governs the passage of time. Here in our own dimensions we have stepped out of that fourth axis to a point where time does not progress in the same way. We are in the same place as our home dimensions, only offset slightly, bumped over to one side."

"Yeah yeah. So why do I have a tail?" Eddie asked.

Around them were the inhabitants of the town on the edge of dimensions. Men and women with animal tails going about their business as if their spines had not undergone major reconstruction. Eddie felt his own hairless, whip-like tail bob behind him and catch breezes as they brushed past. He grabbed it and held it between his hands.

"These are normal people from all over. People who vanished swimming, people who got lost in the bush, even some we thought died in the desert. But something about transcending the fourth dimension transforms them. We suspect the animal was within them all along, merely dormant until some catalyst could bring it to the surface. I am a lemming," said Holt, brushing back his hair with one hand.

And now he mentioned it, Eddie thought he saw parts of the lemming in Holt's features. He was a pear-shaped man who had eyes much blacker than usual. His ears were unnaturally small, his hands nervous and his nose seemed to twitch, as if hunting out a scent. When he patted his hair back Eddie caught a glimpse of mottled fur on the back of his hand.

"I used to go back on occasion. I'd cover myself well and act normal. You may think it a great risk, but the Ashes are the Ashes and I am only human. But in the end I stopped going. It was too difficult, and we have everything we need here. Look at this place. We are unique. We have the chance to be free from the world, to be immortal in our own Empire. What more do we need?

"Of course if necessary we can go back any time, but we must be cautious. We cannot be bombarded by the world at large, all pushing and shoving to get at our small Empire. I have learnt that much about human nature. We cannot be kept as pets or subjects."

Holt rested a hand on Eddie's shoulder and showed him how to shift back into the fourth dimension. The strangest sensation overwhelmed him, and he suddenly realised his heart was beating again. He began to feel dizzy until he remembered to start breathing. He blinked for the first time since he left his home dimensions.

They were on a beach, on the same beach where Eddie got lost. He hid his tail behind him and kept to one side of the sandy gulf, but there was no sign of Timothy or Rob.

"Looking for someone? They are long gone. Time stopped for us, but it kept going here. It must be a month or more since you left. An empty beach where our friends once played—this is the closest we can come to the real world. This is the closest we can come to being home."

"You mean I can't go home?" asked Eddie.

"Oh no, my boy, oh never. Your parents would never accept you. You would be considered a freak. Your school would not let you attend, and no employer would hire a fantatic who wore an animal tail."

"I will!" screamed Eddie. "I can! They're my parents, they'll take me back."

"It's your choice, of course," said Holt. "But then you will go to school. And when you get a job you will work even longer hours every day of the week. You will come home on the weekend and still be thinking about your work. Then without you even realising it your life will have passed you by. All that's left is to wait until the day you expire.

"Ours is not such a bad place. It is full of good people and good things. You can do as you please, live as long as you like, and all day you'll have before you the endless golden beach of an endless golden eternity. It's worth sneaking back every now and then for the odd test match, but can you truly prefer reality?"

"Where are my friends? I want to go home."

Holt smiled down at him. "You can. Any time you like. Or you can make new friends."

"Can't I have both?"

He shook his head sadly. "It's a nice thought, Edward, but do you really want to alert the world to our presence? Could this place withstand the weight of six thousand million bearing down upon it?"

Holt rested a hand on Eddie's shoulder again and slid out of the fourth dimension. The beach was still there and so was the glorious sun, but all frozen like a frame from a silent film. Inside the town Eddie saw sweet shops and children playing on the street corners, and there beside him a rockpool that reflected the sun in huge, lazy patches.

"I want to remember it this way forever," said Eddie.

"This is the way it *is* forever," said Harold Holt. "You don't need to remember. You will always have the real thing."

"Let me think," said Eddie. "Let me think."

Eddie sat down by the silent rockpool and dragged his finger through the water. Then, very slowly, a bright blue jellyfish bobbed into sight. Eddie snatched his finger back and gazed down at the jellyfish in awe, its blue light rippling to and fro against the golden sand.

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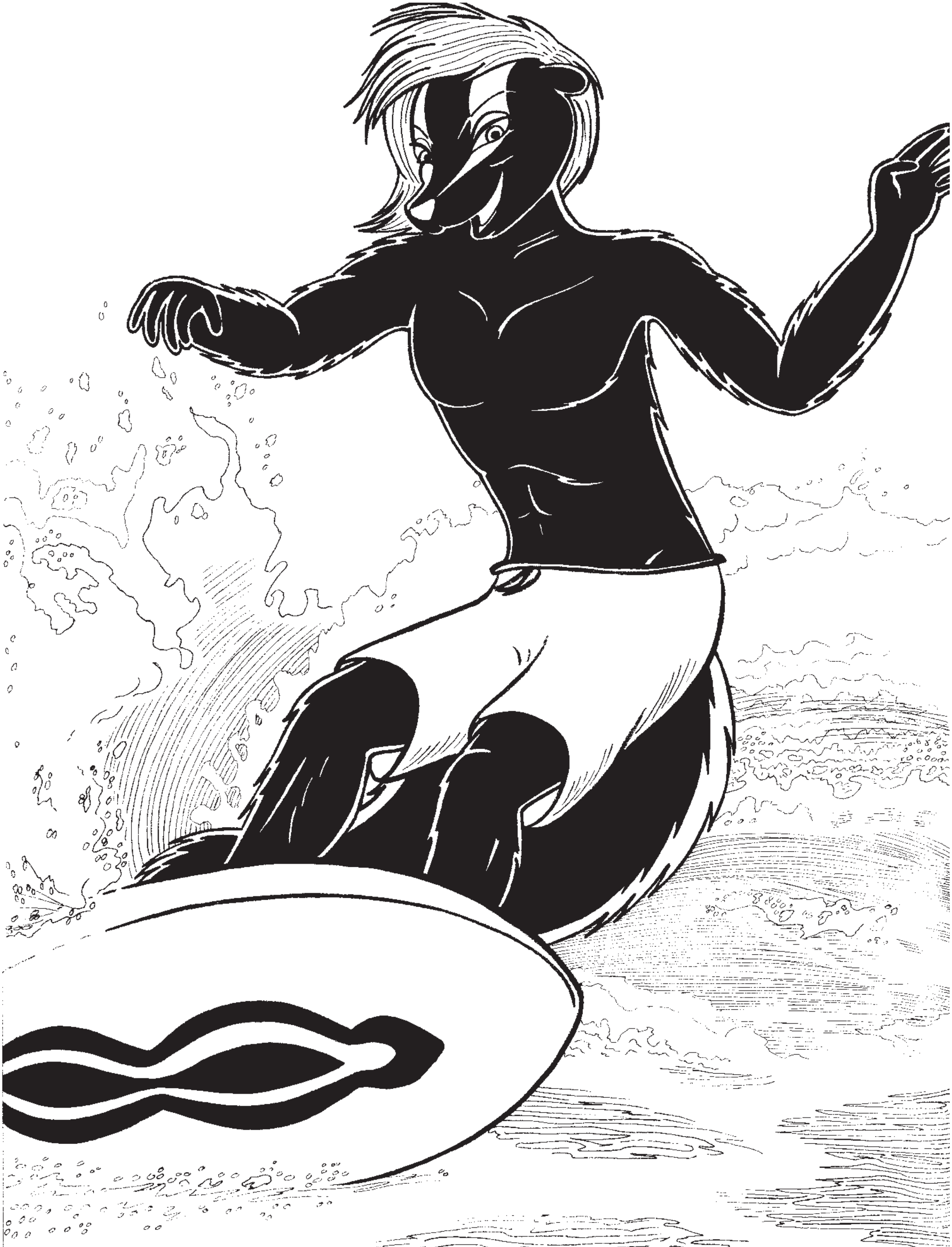
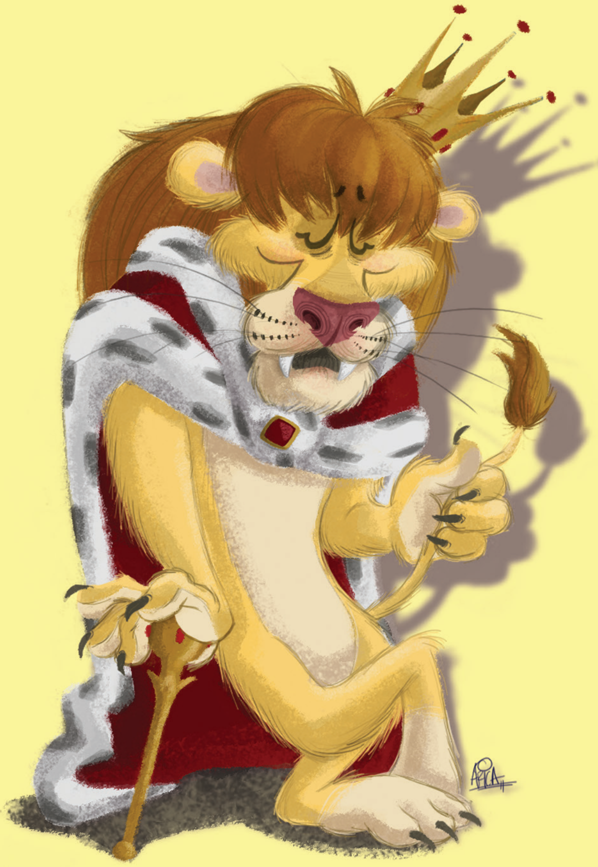


Elliott's Spring Gathering

— 2009 —



His Majesty, King Elliott Ingonyama the First,† cordially invites you to his next Royal Festival: **Elliott's Spring Gathering**, another of Elliott's Live Events. Like both of his previous Royal Festivals (**Elliott's Spring Gathering '08** and **Elliott's Summer Celebration '08**), this event will feature a wide variety of activities and special events for guests of all ages. Included free for all guests attending with a three-day membership, these events include:

- A Friday outing to **Fun Spot USA**, where guests will receive a wristband good for unlimited Go-Kart track rides and on most of the other attractions.
- Sunday morning's **Simba Live! Breakfast**, where our own Simba will be joined by sous chefs Jason Glus and Nicholask Shust (and possibly a special guest or two) to prepare a breakfast that you will not soon forget.
- A Sunday afternoon trip to **Orlando's Wet 'n Wild**, including a full dinner buffet and two additional hours of private time in the park exclusively for His Majesty's guests. For those who wish to fursuit, a special changing area will be provided. (Fursuiters are not permitted in the water, but may go anywhere else in the park.)
- A **Royal Fursuit Tournament**, including games, refreshments, and an assortment of prizes.
- An **Artists' Lounge**, a **Game Room** with all your favorite systems, and a **Movie Room** will be available throughout the weekend. Several dances will also take place in the evenings.
- Fursuiting, volleyball, food, plenty of space for lounging and relaxing, and much much more!

For the occasion, King Elliott has also arranged special rates at the host hotel. The first 40 rooms booked for the event will be available at a rate of **$45** a night (*up to four guests per room*). All rooms after that will be **$60** a night (*again, for up to four guests*).

Event Time and Place:

Friday, May 29, 2009 (starting 10am EST)
through Sunday, May 31, 2009 (9pm EST)
in the Metro Orlando Area, Florida, USA

Hotel Information:

Radisson World Gate Hotel
3011 Maingate Lane • Kissimmee, FL 34747
(Adjacent to Walt Disney World)
(866) 705-7676 — Ask for **Elliott's Live Events** rate

For more information and updated news, visit our web site:

http://ele.furryhost.com/ESG-09

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†This invitation's wording is in the spirit of fun, like the event it represents.

ELE

Elliott's Royal Fursuit Tournament Series

RFT

Like the Noble Tournaments of Old, these games allow Fursuiters to compete for modern glory and riches. The next round of qualifying matches is being held at Elliott's Hospitality Suite,* where other games and refreshments will be available.

Prizes include iPods, Nintendo DS and PSP game systems. A grand prize at ESG'09 of a 42" HD television.

For information and current tournament standings:
http://ele.furryhost.com/ERFTS-09-Standings

Elliott's Royal Art Contests

Like the Medicis before him, His Majesty has chosen to sponsor Furry Artists. With prizes that have included iPods, Nintendo DS and PSP game systems, Wacom tablets, and and a grand prize of a Cintiq ($1,000 value), these contests are judged by both professional artists and by attendees at King Elliott's Events.

For information on past and future art contests:
http://ele.furryhost.com/ERAC

***Join us at our hospitality suite at the Holiday Inn!**
Food, Drinks, Games, and Photos
ele.furryhost.com/FC-Suite

You are cordially Invited…

Midwest FurFest's ***10th Anniversary***

*Our **Guests of Honor** this year will be members of the Midwest FurFest family who have helped **make our convention special** over the past ten years, including:*

Ysengrin Blackpaw
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Jill C. ("Jill0r")
Robert & Margaret Carspecken
Derrick Dasenbrock
DBruin
Thomas K. Dye
M.C.A. Hogarth
Kenket
Lucky the Evil Dog
Erika R. ("Chillymouse")
Rapid T. Rabbit
Will Sanborn
ScribbleFox
Jen Seng
D.C. Simpson
Matt & Darcy Sowers
Tincrash
Ursula Vernon
WhiteFox
Jessica Willard
Foxfeather Zenkova

Midwest FurFest 2009

November 20-23

updates and more at www.furfest.org

NASKATAN AVALON

Touch, Feel, Hear, Be

Touch . . .
Tender momentous sensations
Held in wonderous elations.
Feel . . .
Ecstatic tantalizing motions
By one's strong boundless devotions.
Hear . . .
Heavy sensual deep breathing
Lover's soft and lustful treating.
Be . . .
The perfect center of their seeking
All the grandeur of their needing.

Carpe Casus

So fall the walls asunder,
Rolling fires of roaring thunder.
Rend the silence poetic blade,
Trumpet chaos serenade.

Execute betrayal conceived,
Disregard love's harmony.
Seek the beauty gone astray,
Emotions widowed bring decay.

Return does the other shame,
Mindless hollow soul aflame.
Forgive the fool of sinful past,
Smiles once again to last.

Further Confusion Patrons

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James Augur	Kagur
Justin Kenneth Greenhalgh	Konjin
Kevin Grandjean	Brongaar
Kristen Kim	Minnie/Miss Kitty
Julian Krause	Crypto
Kenneth Calhoun	Kes
Mark Hogan	M
Kenneth James Vetree	BradHound
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Michael Sawyer	Aetobatus
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Jerome Dunham	Royce
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Ripples From the Board

Surfing is all about figuring out how to work with a wave and use its nature to ride it. It's been an appropriate theme for the year for us and one that will stand us in good stead for the future. From the Board's perspective, 2009 will be a time for growth and changes. We've met most of our original goals for Further Confusion, and it's been a year of taking stock and trying to decide the path forward. With a lot of hard work, we think we have a plan.

The first step in that plan was finding a new home. When you grow to over 2,500 people, your options become more limited and the trade-offs you have to make more significant. We searched every possibility within a five-hour drive of the Bay Area, examing costs and growth potentials and weighing all the factors and input we got from our fan base and fellow con-runners.

After a lot of work, worry, and consideration, the Board of Directors is pleased to anounce that the Fairmont San Jose will be the new home for Further Confusion.

The Fairmont San Jose is a gorgeous upscale hotel grounded in diversity. They host many events, including the world-renowned Fanime Con, so it's no surprise that they welcome us with open arms and tails wagging. Several of the staff have attended Further Confusion in the past knowing they may be in the running for our little con. Once they found out we were seriously looking they jumped at the opportunity to host FurCon 2010 and nearly begged us to sign up!

The Fairmont is situated right in the center of tech heaven in wonderful downtown San Jose, California. With so much to see, do and naughm, this simply became the most logical choice. Just a few short steps from the hotel property, a cornucopia of eateries will tempt your discerning and not-so-discerning tastes. Across the street is the famous Tech Museum, celebrating both the history and future of technology. Just around the corner is the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum and Planetarium. Theaters, nightclubs, and fine dining cap off a well-rounded offering. Want more? Sure you do! Check out www.sanjose.org.

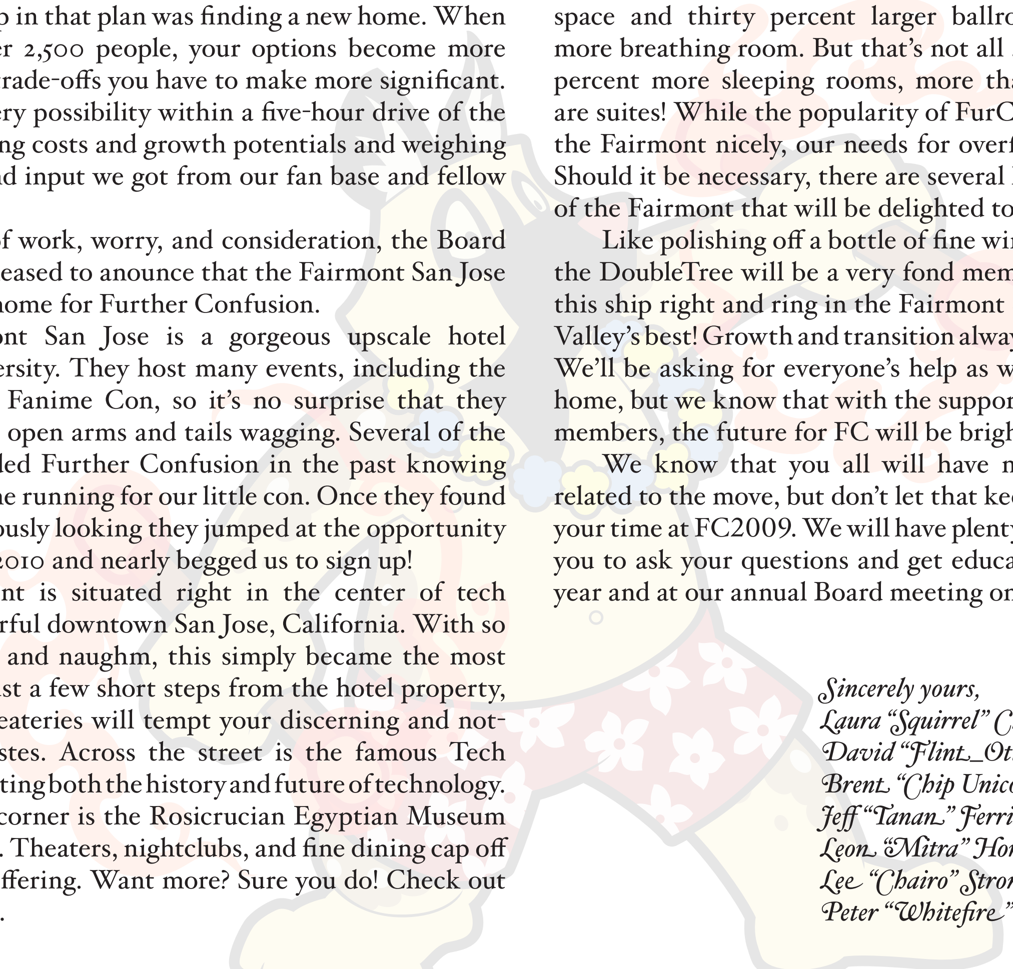
A well-connected light rail system runs along the back side of the hotel. You're literally only a few steps and two simple transfers away from one of the most unique and beautiful cities in the world, San Francisco. And don't worry, the San Jose Airport is only a few more minutes away.

Oh, did we mention we have more space? The Fairmont offers bleeding-edge convention technology in a centralized meeting area. With 17,000 additional square feet of meeting space and thirty percent larger ballrooms, everyone gets more breathing room. But that's not all . . . you also get sixty percent more sleeping rooms, more than seventy of which are suites! While the popularity of FurCon will surely fill out the Fairmont nicely, our needs for overflow will be reduced. Should it be necessary, there are several hotels within a block of the Fairmont that will be delighted to take up the slack.

Like polishing off a bottle of fine wine with good friends, the DoubleTree will be a very fond memory. So let's christen this ship right and ring in the Fairmont San Jose with Silicon Valley's best! Growth and transition always present challenges. We'll be asking for everyone's help as we grow into our new home, but we know that with the support of our staff and our members, the future for FC will be bright.

We know that you all will have millions of questions related to the move, but don't let that keep you from enjoying your time at FC2009. We will have plenty of opportunities for you to ask your questions and get educated over the coming year and at our annual Board meeting on Sunday, January 25.

Sincerely yours,
Laura "Squirrel" Cherry
David "Flint_Otterhall" Cooksey
Brent "Chip Unicorn" Edwards
Jeff "Tanan" Ferris
Leon "Mitra" Horne
Lee "Chairo" Strom
Peter "Whitefire" Torkelson



The Further Confusion 2009 Drink Recipes

Created by Mixologist Kijicoon and his gaze of masked tasters

Surf Safari

- 2 parts pineapple juice
- 1 part orange juice
- 1 part light rum
- Squirt of coconut crème
- ½ shot Chambord

Shake with ice. Serve with ice and a pineapple leaf garnish to suggest a surfboard.

Further Confusion

- 1 shot Hpnotiq liqueur
- 1 shot pineapple juice
- 1 shot midori liqueur
- ½ shot light rum

Shake with ice. Serve with ice and with a cherry or pineapple garnish on a toothpick or sword.

HB'09
ART BY HEATHER BRUTON

Here they come again:

The Ursa Major Awards!

Once again, it's time for YOU to...

Nominate! More formally known as the **Annual Anthropomorphic Literature and Arts Award,** the Ursa Major Award is presented annually for excellence in the furry arts. It is intended as Anthropomorphic (a.k.a. Furry) Fandom's equivalent of the Hugo Award ® (presented by the World Science Fiction Society), mystery fandom's Anthony Award, horror fandom's Bram Stoker Award, and so forth. Anyone may nominate! **Nominations for 2008 works will open January 22, 2009.** To be eligible, a work must have been released between January 1 and December 31 of 2008, and it must include a non-human being given human attributes (anthropomorphic), which can be mental and/or physical (for example, the intelligent rabbits in *Watership Down* for the former and Bugs Bunny for the latter). Simply including an animal character is not sufficient to qualify. Nominations are *not* limited to items included on the Recommended Anthropomorphics List, which are simply some people's recommendations – fur your consideration, as it were. Any works first published during the year under consideration are eligible. The Ursa Major Award categories include **Best Anthropomorphic: Motion Picture, Dramatic Short Work or Series, Novel, Short Fiction, Other Literary Work** (such as short story collections or art portfolio books, etc.), **Comic Book, Comic Strip** (paper or on-line), **Fanzine, Published Illustration, Game** (FRP or video), and **Miscellany** (items that don't fit elsewhere, like toys or models, etc.). **Nominations will end on February 28, so don't delay!**

Vote! Voting for the 2008 awards will start in Spring 2009, after nominations are complete and counted later in March. To request a ballot, or just to find out more about the voting process, visit our web site at **www.ursamajorawards.org,** or write us at: **The Ursa Major Awards, c/o ALAA, P.O. Box 1958, Garden Grove, CA 92842-1958.** Remember, this is a fandom award: It doesn't happen without the fans! So nominate your favorites now, and remember to vote for them this spring!

The Ursa Major Award is administered and presented by the Anthropomorphic Literature and Arts Association (ALAA), a membership organization dedicated to promoting anthropomorphic literature and arts through such projects as this List and Award, and others that may be undertaken later. Discussions are currently taking place to improve their effectiveness and expand their presence throughout Furry fandom. All suggestions are invited. Watch out for SIG meetings at major anthropomorphic conventions!

Silent Ravyn